

# THE LAMENTATYON OF MARY MAGDALEYNE.

*TEXT, WITH CRITICAL INTRODUCTION.*

Inaugural Dissertation for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy  
at the University of Zürich.

BY

BERTHA M. SKEAT

Medieval and Modern Languages Tripos, Newnham College,  
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**Dedication**  
**To my Father**  
**and my Mother.**

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# THE LAMENTATYON OF MARY MAGDALEYNE.

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## INTRODUCTION.

The chief interest of this poem lies in the fact that it was originally given among Chaucer's works by Thynne, probably because it was supposed to be his lost translation of *Origenes upon the Maudeleyne*, mentioned in the Legend of Good Women, l. 428. Tyrwhitt, however, in 1775, threw a doubt upon this fact (cf. Chaucer's Works, ed. by Skeat, III., 308), and it is the object of the present essay to show, not only that the poem was *not* written by Chaucer, but that the whole weight of internal evidence bears testimony to a later date.

## I. SUBJECT.

The subject of the whole poem is the lament of the Magdalene on arriving at the Sepulchre, and finding it empty of her Lord's body. It may be more fully analysed into the following parts.

(ll. 1—35.) i. She explains the cause of her grief—the empty tomb.

(ll. 36—105.) ii. Death alone can end her despair.

(ll. 106—112.) iii. This loss must be due to the malice of the Jews.

(ll. 113—203.) iv. She recalls their cruelty, and the stages of the Passion—the scourging—the Crown of Thorns, and mocking—the nailing on the Cross—the piercing with the spear.

(ll. 204—266.) v. She breaks out into bitter reproaches against the Jews.

(ll. 267—301.) vi. Their last, worst deed has been to steal His body from the Sepulchre.

(ll. 302—329.) vii. She proposes to search for Him throughout the world.

(ll. 330—434.) viii. If this be unavailing, she will go to live a hermit's life in the wilderness.

(ll. 435—483.) ix. She thinks of going to the Virgin Mary.

for comfort, but remembering the Seven Sorrows of Mary, she dare not trouble her.

(ll. 484—616). x. She prays the Lord to come to her, reminding Him how He raised from death her brother Lazarus.

(ll. 617—714). xi. She makes her last will and testament, and bidding a tender farewell to her Lord, commends unto Him her spirit.

## II. AUTHORITY.

So far as we know there is no existing manuscript of this poem. It was first printed in Thynne's edition of Chaucer's Works, London, 1532, and was reprinted in Stowe's edition of 1561, thus occurring in both of the truly representative editions of Chaucer's Works. Thynne's edition, therefore, is the only real authority, and in this respect takes the place of a manuscript; for all later editions, being copied from his book, have no original value.

### BIBLIOGRAPHY.

The poem has been printed in all the *older complete editions* of Chaucer's works, of which the list is given in Professor Skeat's *Chaucer*, vol. I. p. 29.

1. Ed. by William Thynne; London, 1532. Folio. Pr. by Godfray. Fol. cclxi.

2. Reprinted, with additional matter; London, 1542. Folio, p. cccl. The chief addition to the volume is the spurious *Plowman's Tale*.

3. Reprinted, with the matter rearranged; London, no date, about 1550. Folio, p. cccxxv.

4. Reprinted, with large additions by John Stowe. London, 1561. Folio, p. cccxviii.

5. Reprinted, with additions and alterations by Thomas Speght; London, 1598. Folio, p. 318.

Here, for the first time, appear 'Chaucer's Dream' and 'The Flower and the Leaf'; both are spurious.

6. Reprinted, with further additions and alterations by Thomas Speght; London, 1602. Folio, p. 302.

Here, for the first time, the following note is prefixed to the poem:—"This treatise is taken out of *St. Origen* wherein *Mary Magdalen* lamenteth the cruell Death of her *Saviour Christ*."

7. Reprinted, with slight additions; London, 1687. Folio, p. 537.

8. Reprinted, with additions and great alterations in spelling, by John Urry; London, 1721. Folio, p. 520.

This edition is the worst that has appeared.



## LATER EDITIONS.

As these are all reprinted from the older editions, they have no authoritative value. The list of the older editions was drawn up by Henry Bradshaw, late Librarian of the University Library, Cambridge; that of the later ones is given in Bohn's edition of Lowndes' *Bibliographer's Manual of English Literature*.

9. The Works of Chaucer, Edinburgh, 1777. 18mo. 12 vols.

10. Again, Edinburgh, 1782. 12mo. 14 vols.

Published by Bell, in his edition of the *British Poets*, with engravings after Stothard.

11. The Works of Chaucer, edited by S. W. Singer. London, 1822. Foolscape 8vo. 5 vols.

12. The Works of Chaucer will also be found in the *Collections of Poets*, published by Anderson (1793—1807), and

13. Chalmers (1810).

14. Chaucer's Poetical Works, edited by Sir H. Nicolas, post 8vo. 6 vols. Part of the Aldine edition of the *British Poets*. Pickering, 1845.

15. Poetical Works, with introduction, notes, memoir and glossary, by Robert Bell. London: Parker, 1855. 12mo. 8 vols.

It seems evident, that even in the case of the older editions, each of them was reprinted, with more or less mistakes, from the edition preceding, without reference to the original. The text of the *Lamentation*, given in this essay, is taken from Thynne's edition of 1532, in the Cambridge University Library.

Tyrwhitt, who made an entirely new edition of the *Canterbury Tales* in 1775—8, rejects this poem as being by Chaucer. He says in his Glossary, s.v. *Origenes*:—"In the list of Chaucer's Works, in the *Legend of Good Women*, l. 427, he says of himself:—

"He made also, gon is a grete while,  
*Origenes upon the Maudeleine*"—

meaning, I suppose, a translation into prose or verse, of the Homily *æ Maria Magdalena*, which has been commonly, though falsely, attributed to Origen; v. Opp. Origenis, T. ii. p. 291, ed. Paris, 1604. I cannot believe that the poem entitled *The Lamentation of Marie Magdaleine*, which is in all the [older] editions of Chaucer, is really that work of his. It can hardly be considered as a translation, or even as an imitation of the Homily; and the composition, in every respect, is infinitely meaner than the worst of his genuine pieces." Chaucer, ed. Skeat, III., 308.

In order to prove that the language is "infinitely meaner" than that of Chaucer, we will examine in detail both the language and metre.

## LANGUAGE.

### DIALECT.

The poem is written in the East Midland dialect, the precursor of the modern literary English, and therefore presents few striking peculiarities. The chief characteristic of the Midland dialect is the termination of the present plural indicative in *eu* instead of the Northern *es* or the Southern *eth*. These terminations were for the most part dropped at the period when this poem was written; we have only one plural *growen* in l. 346. There are no traces of any Northern influence, but in l. 245 there is the Southern plural *doth* and in ll. 66, 101, 193 the Southern plural *be* is used instead of the Northern *are*.

The characteristic distinguishing the East-Midland from the West-Midland is the formation of the present indicative Singular, the West-Midland having the forms *hope*, *hopes*, *hopeth*, while the East-Midland has *hope*, *hopest*, *hopeth*. In the Lamentation we have in the 2nd sing. pres., *knowest* l. 532, *oughtest* l. 554, *withdrawest* l. 566, *constrainest* l. 561, and other instances; in the 3rd sing. pres., *endureth* l. 395, *brenneth*, *flameth* l. 590, *expresseth* l. 610, and other instances.

### VOCABULARY.

With regard to the vocabulary, the first striking fact is the preponderance of French and Latin words in the *Lamentation*. This is somewhat above the average of Romance words in Chaucer. If we consider this fact in connection with the extremely limited nature of the vocabulary, the impression produced is, that this vocabulary was acquired from books, rather than through familiar conversation, or gained through intercourse, mainly scholastic, with a narrow social range, such as might be afforded by a conventual education.

Some of the words introduced were not in very common use at that time, while occasionally the phrases and expressions sound forced and artificial. The following are instances of this peculiarity of usage.

l. 1. "*Plonged* in the wave of mortal distresse."

*Plonged* occurs in Chaucer's Translation of Boethius in the form *ploungen* but is otherwise little used in early times. It occurs also in Malory's *Morte d'Arthur*, 243, 30 (Caxton's ed.)

l. 3. "Or who shal *deuoyde* this great heuynesse" (cf. l. 424) "I shulde anone *deuoyde* al my greuaunce." *Deuoyde* as transitive verb occurs sometimes in Early English. See c. 1325, E. E. Allit, P.A. 15, "That wont watz whyle deuoyde my wrange." Also 1509, Hawes' Past Pleas. 45, 61, 63, 64.

l. 5. "My lorde is gon alas who wrought this *treyne*."

*Treyne*. Used in the sense of *plot* in R. of Brunne, also in Morte d'Arthur ed. Brock, 4192, in the expression "treson and trayne."

l. 60. "Alas here is a woful *permutacion*."

*Permutacion*. This appears to be the earliest reference for quadrisyllabic form of this word. Cf. Chaucer, Troil, v. 1541.

l. 96. "Me to certifye of myne *enquyraunce*."

*Enquyraunce*. See *Enquyraunce*, l. 648.

l. 119. "The bloode down *reyled* in most habundaunce."

l. 181. "Downe *rayled* right faste."

*Raylle*, meaning "to flow," is not in Chaucer, but is common in later authors, and is found in Lydgate's *Storie of Thebes*: "Vpon the pleyne he made her blode to raylle." Other instances are, in the *Troy Book*, Fol. R, 4.

"The red blood downe began to rayle."

In a poem by Lydgate, edited in Furnivall's *Political, Religious and Love Poems* (E. E. T. S.), p. 111.

"My bloody woundis downe raylyng by thys tre."

See also Lydgate's *Minor Poems*, p. 220. It seems thus a characteristic of Lydgate to use this word in connection with blood or wounds.

l. 120. "The bloody *rowes* stremed downe ouer al."

*Rowes* in the sense of beams, rays of light, occurs in Chaucer's *Complaint of Mars*, l. 2. Compare *rewe*, meaning a row, line, from A.S. *ræw*. The old word *daiȝ-rewe*, meaning "dawn," occurs in the Owl and Nightingale, and the Alliterative Poems. Chaucer employed the latter part of the word once only, and Lydgate took it from Chaucer and brought it into commoner use. See *The Complaint of the Black Knight*, l. 596.

"And whyl the twyilight and the rowes rede."

Also the *Troy Book*, Fol. E. 1.

"Whan that the rowes and the rayes rede."

Thus the introduction of this word also into the *Lamentation* suggests that the author was influenced by Lydgate.

l. 225. "I can nat reporte ne make no *rehersayle*

Of my *demenyng* with the cyrcumstaunce."

*Rehersayle*. *Rehersen* occurs in Piers Plowman.

The form *rehersall* is given in Palsgrave. The word is found in a late piece called "Sir Peter Idle's Directions to his son," The Book of Precedence, Part I., p. 110.

"For callyng to *rehersaill* lest thou it rewe."

*Rehersayll* occurs twice in Caxton's Troy Book (about 1474), p. 453, l. 20 ; p. 245, l. 43. It also occurs twice in Malory's *Morte d'Arthur* (Caxton's ed. 1485), as *rehersail*, 322, 25 ; *rehersal*, 611, 34. It was evidently thus becoming a common word at this time.

*Demenying*, from vb. to *demean* + *-ing*. It means conduct, behaviour, demeanour, and is obsolete except in "demeaning of oneself," i.e., comporting oneself. The first instance of its use is in Lydgate's *Temple of Glas*, 750. "Hir sad demening." The verb *demene* occurs in Malory's *Morte d'Arthur*, (Caxton's ed.), 23, 7.

l. 232. "Ah ye iewes worse than dogges *rabyate*."

*Rabyate*. This is an extraordinary expression, of which I know no other example. Adjectives ending in *-ate* were of comparatively late introduction. Dr. Murray, in his note on *-ate*, in the *English Dictionary*, shows that this suffix was used to form participial adjectives from the Latin pp. in *-atus*. Some Latin p. participles survived in O. French, as *confus* from *confusus*, *content* from *contentus*. This analogy was followed in Later French in introducing new words from Latin ; and both classes of French words, i.e., the popular survivals and the later accessions being adopted in English, provided English in its turn with an analogy for adapting similar words directly from Latin by dropping the termination. This began about 1400. Latin *-atus* gave *-at*, and after 1400 *-e* was introduced to mark the long vowel. Ex. *desolatus*, *desolat*, desolate. Examples of such adjectives in the *Lamentation* are *infortunate*, l. 29, and *disconsolate*, l. 515. In l. 393, *translate* occurs as past participle.

l. 270. "But yet they must *embesyle* his presence."

*Embesyle*. Used transitively as meaning "to make away with," especially "to carry off secretly (what belongs to another person) for one's own use." In this sense now obsolete. First instance, 1397. *Will of John of Gaunt*, in Nichols' *Royal Wills*, 155. "Sans rien ent embeseiller." Last instance, 1750. Carte. *Hist. Eng.* II. 151. "Bibles.....chained so as not to be embezzled." See Murray's *Eng. Dic.* under *Embezzle*.

l. 497. "There is no more but dethe is my *fynaunce*."

*Fynaunce*. Used in sense of *ransom* by Lord Berners, trans. of Froissart, i, 202, 312 (R.) "All the finances or revenues." (See Murray's *Dict.*)

l. 533. "If thou withdrawe thy noble *dalyaunce*."

*Dalyaunce* from vb. to *dally* + *-ance*. Probably found in Old French, but not yet recorded. It means talk, converse, usually of a light and familiar kind, but also used of serious conversation or discussion ; in this sense now obsolete. It occurs in 1447. Bokenham, *Seyntys* (Roxb.) 162. "Marthe

fyrst met hym [Christ] . . . And hadde wyth hym a long dalyaunce." 1496. *Dives et Paup.* (W. de W.) vi. xv. 259. "Redyng and dalyaunce of holy wryt." (See Murray's Dict.)

l. 579. "Alas my lorde take fro me this *dommage*."

*Dommage* here means loss, detriment, trouble or misfortune. Morte d'Arthur, *domage*, 59, 5; *dammage*, 72, 8. (See Murray's Dict.) Also frequently in Caxton's Troy Book.

l. 606. "No answe receyuyng of myne *enquiraunce*."

l. 648. "Alway to sertche and make due *enqueraunce*."

*Enquiraunce*. This form does not occur in Chaucer, who uses instead *enqueringe*. See Man of Lawes Tale, l. 888. "And thus, by wit and subtil enqueringe."

l. 682. "My perle *oriental*."

*Oriental*. This word occurs in Ch. Astrolabe, pt. i. sect. 5 l. 4. It obtained the meaning "Eastern, of superior quality," and is thus used in Chaucer's Legend of Good Women, l. 221. "For of o perle fyne, *oriental*." Used for sapphires, see Prof. Skeat's note, Piers Plowman, b. 2, 14.

l. 695. "Shal no more alas my mynde *reconforte*."

*Reconforte*. This word occurs in Chaucer's Knight's Tale, 2852. Also in Melibœus, 2168, and again in 2850, reconforted. The form *recomforte* occurs twice in Troilus.

l. 704. "Thy blessed visage so *replete* with grace."

*Replete* occurs in Chaucer, C. T. 14963 (Nun's Priest's Tale).

"Ne fynde yow nat *repleet* of humours hote."

*Replete*, Caxton's Troy Book, 454, 26.

From these instances it will be seen that this author has a fancy for employing words of Romance origin that are not commonly used, and for occasionally introducing them in quaint and somewhat artificial collocations. Also the fact that two or three peculiar words first made popular by Lydgate, such as *rowes*, *raylle*, are found in the *Lamentation*, suggests that the author had been brought to some extent under the influence of Lydgate.

### c. CONTRACTION AND ELISION.

There are hardly any examples of contraction occurring, except, *I not*, l. 49, 68, for *I ne wot*. In lines 12, 425, *he is* occurs pronounced as one syllable, the *e* being elided before the vowel following. Similarly *here is*, in l. 598, and *to aray*, l. 233, in which latter case the *o* is elided.

Final *e* is apparently elided in the following, but was most likely not sounded:—*waille* and *wēpe*, l. 7; *sūche is*, l. 29; *cōmplēyne* or *spēke*, l. 49; and many other examples.

It is also frequently suppressed in the common words *wolde*, *shulde*, *have*, *muste*, etc.

Medial *e* is elided or slurred over in *sūstenaūnce*, l. 344; *nēverthelēsse*, l. 481; *ōtherwise*, l. 617; *sōuerūyne*, l. 692.

Medial *i* is slurred over in the words *dirige*, l. 641; *charite*, l. 642.

Final *ed* is elided in :—*plonged*, l. 1; *brused*, l. 153; *peersed*, l. 185; *thrilled*, l. 195; *caused*, l. 234; *preched*, l. 236; *hanged*, l. 279; and other examples. This marked tendency to the suppression of *ed* as a separate syllable is less common in other poets of the period.

Final *es* is much less frequently elided, but cases occur in *rockes*, l. 335; *paynes*, l. 66, 362, 386, 658; *vnnethes*, l. 469; *bones*, l. 80. The fact of this elision shows a very late date, as the use of the final *es* is sometimes exceptionally found even in Spenser and Shakespeare. In the later poems of Lydgate, *es* is still sounded.

Final *er* is slurred over in :—*neuer*, l. 117, 234; *euer*, l. 143, 510; *hereafter*, l. 262; *lenger*, l. 372; *euer I wepe*, l. 409; *euer I go*, l. 412; *mother*, l. 441; *better*, l. 34. This is common in Chaucer in the case of *neuer* and *euer*.

Final *en* as mark of the infinitive or plural of the verb, does not occur, except in *growen*, l. 346, therefore there are no instances of its elision.

In studying the scansion of this poem we find that the practice of employing extra syllables, glided over very lightly or very lightly pronounced, is fairly common.

#### c. GRAMMAR.

*Infinitive*.—The grammatical functions of the final *e* are confused, and in many cases lost, in this poem. Thus in line 6, *lorde* is the A. S. *hlāford*, *gone* and *layde* are respectively strong and weak participles; hence the final *e* is impossible in all cases. In l. 2, *compleyn*, the *e* of the infinitive is dropped; in other infinitives, *saye*, *vnderstonde*, *fonde*, *bewayle*, *endure*, *fynde*, *complayne*, etc., the final *e* is kept, though, as has been shown already, in many cases it is not sounded.

The only other instances in which the *e* of the infinitive is dropped are, *tel*, l. 11, *befal*, l. 16, *tel*, l. 73, *rest*, l. 80, *ren*, l. 91, *cal*, l. 103, *appal*, l. 158, *socour*, l. 217, *aray*, l. 233, *quel*, l. 269, *conuey*, l. 294, *wander*, l. 320, *dwel*, l. 333, *say*, l. 348, *lay*, l. 363, *let*, l. 367, *brast*, l. 490, *comfort*, l. 501, *pas*, l. 525, *pay*, l. 526, *brest*, l. 542, *accept*, l. 552, *conuey*, l. 578, *multiply*, l. 592 (riming with *dye*), *discener*, l. 707. The infinitives *do* and *go* are thus spelt invariably throughout.

The spelling *ren* in l. 91 may be compared with *renne* in lines 310, 343. Similarly *let* in l. 367 may be compared with *lette* in ll. 513, 552. Thus the *e* in the infinitive in this poem

is usually kept, but not sounded, the few cases in which it is dropped being verbs mostly ending in *l, r, t, y*.

*Dative Case.*—There seems no clear instance of the final *e* remaining to mark the dative case. *Dethe* and *bloode* are usually so spelt, in whatever case they may occur. As these represent the A.S. *deap* and *blōd*, it is evident the final *e* is wrongly added.

*Adjectives.*—In Chaucer, adjectives have two forms, the indefinite and the definite, the latter being preceded by a distinguishing, demonstrative, or possessive adjective. The definite form of the adjective takes final *e*. We will see how far this rule is carried out in the *Lamentation*.

1. 3. *Great* is used as definite form of the adjective, the final *e* being wrongly suppressed. Cf. also l. 9, "his great passyon;" l. 40, "their great vyolence;" l. 236, "the right waye;" l. 264, "your good name." On the other hand, the final *e* is frequently preserved in this case. Ex.: l. 6, "this sodayne chaunce;" l. 14, "my parfyte loue;" l. 42, "myne owne turtyl true;" l. 75, "his mercy dere;" l. 176, "a blynde knight;" l. 216, "my swete herte," etc.

In line 127, "thornes sharpe and kene," the final *e*, marking the plural, is preserved.

In Chaucer, monosyllabic past participles, when used adjectivally, may take a plural in *e*, but in this poem the final *e* is sometimes added wrongly to the singular, used predicatively. Ex.: l. 432, "he is paste;" l. 98, "my lorde is slayne;" l. 8, "that here in graue was layde;" l. 10, "who hath him betrayde." But this may be due to Thynne.

*Adverbs.*—In Thynne's edition of the *Testament of Love*, the words *nowe* and *howe* frequently occur, the spelling being a peculiarity of his. In the *Lamentation* we find many examples of this—*e.g.*, *nowe*, ll. 44, 105, 222, 265, 288, 313, 369, 426, 430; *howe*, ll. 184, 218, 327; and further instances. The final *e* in these cases is of course wrongly added.

*Summary.*—From these facts we may conclude:

- i. That the final *e*, even when preserved, was frequently mute.
- ii. That it was dropped in many cases where it was grammatically required.
- iii. That it was added in many cases which were grammatically incorrect, but in such cases it does not appear to have been pronounced.

These general conclusions point to a date for the poem considerably later than Chaucer, who was most particular about the use of the final *e*, later also than Lydgate, who pronounced final *e* in the main as Chaucer did, and than Occleve, who was likewise careful in this respect.

## IV. METRE.

## a. PECULIARITIES OF RIME.

ll. 41, 42. *True* rimes with *Jesu*. *True* in Chaucer is spelt *trewē*, and the final *e* is always sounded. This instance proves the final *e* is not sounded here.

ll. 674, 676. *Huc* rimes with *Jesu*. *Huc* is from A. S. *hiw*, therefore *e* is not sounded as final, but *ue* is meant to represent one vowel sound. It is possible that the *u* in *Jesu* was beginning to be sounded as the *ue* in modern *sue*, more especially as it is here also rimed with *knewe*. See Ellis, *Early English Pronunciation*, p. 586. *Early English Text Society*, 1869.

l. 47. *Gone* is the infinitive, from A. S. *gán*, therefore there is properly no final *e*, but the *e* is merely written to mark the *o* as being long. As in line 46, *grone* (verb) rimes with *gone*, the final *e* was not sounded in this word also.

ll. 91, 93, 92, 94, 95, give the rimes *presence*, *diligence*, *sustenance*, *attendaunce*, *enquitaunce*. It is possible that in all these words of French origin the final *e* was still sounded, as it is to this day in French words set to music, and in some dialects.

l. 105. *Loste* is a weak past participle formed from the A.S. *losian*; the pp. of *léosan* was *loren*. It has properly no final *e*; it rimes with *coste*, (coast), from A.F. *coste*, therefore in this French word the *e* has become mute.

l. 127. *Kene*, from A.S. *céne*, rimes with *eyen*, eyes. Both words must have been pronounced as monosyllables, but even so, the rime is imperfect. In Chaucer the forms are *Ken-c*, *y-én*. Although he uses the verb *die* in the forms *deye* and *dye*, also the adjective *high* as *heye* and *hye*, he never uses but one form of *eye*, always pronounced *yē*, pl. *yēn*, (*iijō*, *iijōn*.) Hence the occurrence of this rime alone would prove the *Lamentation* to be non-Chaucerian.

l. 85. *Dye*, to die, rimes with *why*, from A.S. *hwi*, and also with *nye*, A.S. *néah*. In *dye*, the final *e*, marking the infinitive, is therefore mute.

l. 146. *Hens* rimes with Lat. *liquesceus*, and is thus a monosyllable. Chaucer has the forms *henne*, *hennes*.

l. 169. *Disguysed* rimes with *to-ryued*, l. 171, which is a mere assonance. Professor Skeat, in his edition of Chaucer, vol. 6., p. lvi., shows that in the whole of Chaucer's works, only 3 possible instances of Assonances are found, and that all these instances are very doubtful.

Book of the Duchesse, 79, 80; *terme* rimes with *yerne* in Thynne's edition. But there is no M.S. authority for *yerne*, and it is quite possible that Chaucer wrote *erme*, which word he uses elsewhere.



Troil. v. 9. Most MSS. have *clere* to rime with *grene* and *quene* ; but some MSS. have *shene*. These three rimes also occur together in Parl. Foules, 296.

Troil. ii. 884. *Syke* rimes with *endyte* and *whyte*. It is possible that Chaucer here wrote *syte*. Hence there is no absolute proof that Chaucer ever employed Assonances in his poems.

In Schick's edition of Lydgate's Temple of Glas, he says, "In three cases we find an assonance in place of the rhyme : ll. 125, 126 : *ascape* : *take* ; ll. 856, 858, 859 : *perfourme* ; *refourme* : *mourne* ; and ll. 1017, 1018 : *accepte* : *correcte*. We need not blame the monk too much for this oversight ; for sometimes, Assonances are put unawares by poets who are particularly conspicuous for the purity of their rhymes." Schick has also this footnote. "Assonances in the *Black Knight* have been pointed out by Skeat, in the *Academy*, Aug. 10, 1878, p. 144, col. 1 : *forjudged* : *excused*, 274 ; *ywreke* : *clepe*, 284.

It seems, therefore, that assonances are less uncommon in Lydgate's work than in that of Chaucer ; but there appears to be only this one undoubted instance in the *Lamentation*.

l. 177. *Souerayne* rimes with *twayne*, l. 179, and *vayne*, l. 180, from A. F. *veine*. Hence the final *e* in *vayne* was not sounded. In Chaucer, *souerayn* in the masc. nom. dat. and acc. does *not* take final *e*, which is only added in the vocative and feminine.

ll. 197. *Agayne*, from A. S. *ongéan*, rimes with *payne*, O. F. *peine*, showing that the final *e* in this latter case is not sounded.

l. 200. *To tore*, pp. from A. S. *to-teran*, rimes with *sore*, from A. S. *sār*. The form *to tore* as pp. occurs also in Chaucer, Canon's Yeoman's Prologue, 635. Professor Skeat, in his Chaucer, vol. 6. p. xxxi. has a long paragraph on the treatment of open and close *o*, as shown in Chaucer's rimes. He says :—"These are distinguished by their origin. Thus open long *o* (ao) arises (1) from A. S. *ā* ; or (2) from the lengthening of A. S. short *o* at the end of an open syllable. I have observed that Chaucer frequently makes a difference between the open *o* that arises from these two sources." He then gives an analysis of rimes in which the open *o* occurs, in Troilus, the Minor Poems, the Legend of Good Women, and the Canterbury Tales. From this he proves that, with the exceptions of the words *more*, *before*, and occasionally *therefore*, Chaucer keeps the two sets of words quite distinct, viz. (1) *evermore*, *namore*, *more*, *lore*, *hore* (from A. S. *hār*), *gore*, *ore* (from A. S. *ār*), *rore*, *sore* ; together with the French *restore* ; and (2) *before*, *bore*, *y-bore*, *forelore*, *swore*, *therefore*,

wherefore. He further adds :—" In spite of all the exceptional uses of the two words *more* and *before*, we cannot but see, in the above examples, a most remarkable tendency to keep asunder two vowel-sounds which it must have required a delicate ear to distinguish." This is interesting, as proving exceptional care on the part of the author.

We find accordingly that later writers did not take the same pains. Thus, in Lydgate's *Complaint of the Black Knight*, 218, we find *sore* (from A. S. *sār*) riming with *tore*, pp. (from A. S. *toren*).

Note that this last instance is exactly parallel to the one under discussion, which shows that the author of the *Lamentation* was also indifferent in the matter of riming these words together.

l. 214. *Crye*, a shortened form of *cryen*, is from the A. F. *crier*, *cryer*. The fact of its riming with *incessantly* shows that the final *e* in the French word *crye* is now mute.

l. 219. *Slayne*, from A. S. pp. *slægen*, rimes with *payne*, another instance showing that the final *e* in the French word is not sounded.

l. 309. *Compase*, from O. F. *compas*, late Lat. *compassum* (acc.), rimes with *place*, showing that the final *e* in the latter French word is not sounded. We do find in *Sir Thopas* the rime of *gras* with *plas*, B. l. 1971.

l. 386. This stanza is most important, as proving that the sound of *e* in *be* was still distinct from the sound of *y* in *inwardly*. Throughout this poem there is no instance of these sounds being rimed together, whereas the sound of the *y* is shown by the fact that *incessantly* is rimed with *crye*, as noted above. The rimes in this stanza are *be*, *me*, (1st and 3rd), *inwardly*, *newfully*, *wonderfully*, (2nd, 4th, 5th), *blee*, *se*, (6th and 7th). The fact that these vowels are thus carefully distinguished proves that the *e* had its old sound still preserved, and had not yet become the modern *e*.

Curtis, in his *Clariodus*, gives abundant evidence to show, from the riming of M. E. *e* with Fr. *i*, and the suffixes *-ly* and *-lie*, that in Scottish and Northern texts the sound of the *e* had already changed. Thus the vowel-sound in Early English *mē* (mēe) later became *me* (mii), and this change took place earlier in the North than in the Midland and Southern dialects. The fact that the older pronunciation of *e* (ēe) was still preserved in a poem written so late as the *Lamentation*, shows that it is not written in the Northern dialect.

l. 568. This line furnishes additional proof of the older pronunciation of *e* being retained, for the word *the*, modern English *thee*, is rimed with the Latin word *me*. This occurs again in lines 615, 616.

l. 589. Here also we have the word *charite* riming with the Latin *me*, showing that *e* still represented the sound (ē).

l. 428. Here *rote*, from Icel. *rót*, is rimed with *wote*, from A. S. *wát*, giving an instance of a close *o* and open *o* being rimed together. Professor Skeat shows that Chaucer most carefully distinguishes between the close and open *o*. A very few exceptions to this rule are enumerated; but the Icel. *rót* is given as one of the cases in which no exception is made.

l. 456. The riming of pp. *gone* with *upon* is an instance of a long open *o* and short open *o* being rimed together. As noted above, in discussing line 200, we find that Chaucer always distinguishes between these vowels, whereas Lydgate and later writers tend to confuse them.

In the *Cuckoo and Nightingale*, stanza 41, we have *bore*, A.S. pp. *boren*, riming with *more*, A.S. *māra*, showing that in the beginning of the century these rimes were considered permissible.

l. 653. Here we have the French word *cost*, Lat. *costa*, riming with *gost*, A.S. *gāst*, and again with *most*, Old Mercian *māst*, showing indifference in the distinction of the finer vowel-sounds.

l. 673. *Face* rimes with *sollace*. Hence the final *e* was not sounded in either of these words. This is also shown by the riming of *face* with *alas*, lines 575, 577.

l. 618. *Evermore*, riming with *restore* and *bore*, affords an example of a long *o* in English, a French long *o*, and a short *o* in English being rimed together.

l. 611. *Fayne*, from A.S. *fægen*, riming with *payne*, Fr. *peine*, shows that the final *e* in the latter word is mute.

A few additional examples may be given, illustrating the treatment of the final *e*.

l. 282. *Corse*, A.F. *cors*, is rimed with *deuorce* and with *force*, hence the final *e* was mute in all these words.

l. 295. *Paradise*, Fr. *paradis*, O.F. *parvis*, Late Lat. *paradisum*, is rimed with *suffise*, showing that the final *e* is not sounded in either word. In line 181, similarly *wise* is rimed with *Paradyse*.

l. 138. *Mercilesse*, formed from F. *merci*, and A.S. *-leas*, without, is rimed with *largenesse* and with *cursydnesse*, tending to show that final *e* was sounded in none of these cases. Similarly, in lines 246, 248, *mercylesse* and *woodnesse* rime together. In lines 709, 711, 712, *heuinness*, *distresse*, and *mercylesse* rime together.

l. 366. *Inwardly*, riming with *remedy* in line 368, is an instance of a word ending in *-ly* riming with a French noun ending in *-ye* or *-ie* (A. F. *remédie* from Lat. *remedium*). In Prof. Skeat's Chaucer, vol. 1, dealing with the Romaunt of the

Rose, he gives as test III. of Chaucer's authorship *the riming of -y with -y-ë*. On this point he says :

"With two intentional exceptions (both in the ballad metre of Sir Thopas), Chaucer *never* allows such a word as *trewely* (which etymologically ends in -y) to rime with French substantives in -y-ë, such as *fol-y-ë*, *Jelos-y-ë* (Ital. follia, gelosia). But in fragment B, examples abound ; e.g., *I, malady(e)*, 1849 ; *hastily, company(e)*, 1861 ; *worthy, curtesy(e)*, 2209 and many more. This famous test, first proposed by Mr. Bradshaw, is a very simple but effective one."

The riming of *remedy* with *dye* in line 369, is quite permissible, as it is also found in Chaucer. Professor Skeat, in vol. I, p. 8, mentions as one characteristic of Chaucer's work, "Words that, etymologically, should end in -y-e, rime together. These are of two sorts : (a) French substantives ; and (b) words in -y, with an inflexional -e added." Among the 17 examples he quotes is *dy-e*, infin. mood, *remedy-e*, F. sb., 1479.

We may here note that the adverbial ending -ly has but one pronunciation throughout this poem. It rimes either with itself or with such words as *dye*. Cf. lines 590, 592, 593, *incessantly, multiply, dye* ; lines, 121, 123, 124, *maliciously, incessantly, besy*. In the middle-Scotch Romance *Clariodus*, however, Curtis shows that the suffix -ly had obtained two different pronunciations, as has been before mentioned.

l. 461. There is only one instance of rimes with -ight, namely *right and fight*. Hence there is *no* example of -ight riming with -yt, which, though never found in Chaucer, sometimes occurs in later authors. Thus in the *Romaunt of the Rose*, Fragment B 2555, *dight* rimes with *delyt*. See Professor Skeat's Chaucer, vol. 6, pp. xxv., xxviii.

*Summary of results.*—From an examination of the rimes in this poem we can obtain the following general results :

I. *Final -e*. In words derived from the French this may still have been sounded, as it is in French songs and dialects to this day. But on the other hand, all the instances collected go to prove (1) that the final -e in English words was already dropped ; (2) that the final -e in French words was also dropped. This loss of the final -e is evidence :

a. That this poem is *not* written by Chaucer, since he is most careful in his use of the final e, especially where it is grammatically required.

b. That the poem was written at some time during the 15th century, as it was during this period that the right use of the final e was lost. In the 16th century it had disappeared. Thus the *Court of Love*, written in language of the 16th century, contains *no* examples of the occurrence of the final e. The fact that it is so frequently dropped in the *Lamentation*

proves that that poem was not written very *early* in the 15th century.

II. Instances of words ending in *-ly* riming with words ending in *-ye* are against Chaucerian authorship.

III. The occurrence of an assonance in such a short poem is against Chaucerian authorship, but connects this work with the time of Lydgate.

IV. The riming together of *o*, derived from A.S. *á* and A.S. short *o* respectively, seldom occurs in Chaucer, but has an exact parallel in Lydgate's Complaint of the Black Knight. Compare also pp. *bore* and *more* in the Cuckoo and Nightingale, stanza 41. Hence we have here another slight connecting link with the work of this period.

V. The fact that the sounds of *e* in *be* and of *y* in *inwardly* are kept quite distinct, shows that the older pronunciation of *e* was still retained. The change of *e* to *ii* took place earlier in the North, and is illustrated in the Romance of Clariodus. Hence the *Lamentation* is either much earlier than Clariodus, or if other evidence shows it to be *not* of very early origin, it is manifestly not written in the Northern dialect.

VI. The riming together of a close *o* and an open *o*, as in *rote* and *wote* (miswritten for *woot*), is against Chaucerian authorship.

VII. Schick, in his edition of Lydgate's Temple of Glas, p. lxii., says: "All this shows that there is in Lydgate a considerable advance beyond Chaucer in the dropping of the final *e* in Romance words, or rather, to express it more exactly, Lydgate does not always refrain from doing at the end of a verse what Chaucer does not hesitate to do in the middle . . . With Teutonic words, the monk seems to be far more careful; I can only find one example of such rhymes in our poem which would be inadmissible in Chaucer's system."

In the *Lamentation* we have found that the final *e* is constantly dropped in words of both *Romance* and *Teutonic* origin. As examples of the latter, note *hue*, *kene*, *dye*, *true*, *knewe*, *wise*, *woodnesse*. This points to a date later than that of Lydgate's earlier work.

#### b. ACCENT.

In compound words the accent was permitted to vary. Compare the lines:—

4 "Frö mē wōfūl Mārȝ || wōfūl Māgdāleȝne."

284 "Thān hād nōt bēfāl || this wōfūll dēuōrse."

In these, the accentuation of *woful* is seen to vary.

The word *goodnesse* which only occurs twice in this poem,

seems in both cases to receive the more modern accentuation, the accent being placed upon the first syllable.

381 "Hīs pōrte, hīs chēre || hīs'gōodnēsse ēuērmōre."

669 "Pleāsēth hīs gōodnēsse || tō tāke it in grēe."

In Chaucer, words of a French origin commonly have the accent placed on a later syllable than at present; e.g. honoūr, natūre, acceptāble.

But in the *Lamentation* there are some curious instances of the accent being thrown upon an earlier syllable. Thus lines 363, 364 end with *réason*, *séason*. In line 22, note the verb *adiuertȝe*, and in line 678, the adjective *excellēt*. In line 124, the adjective *besȝ* has the accent on the termination. The word *crēūtūre* in lines 54, 207, seems to have kept its old pronunciation, as also *āvēntūre*, l. 78, *sēpūltūre*, l. 80, *nūtūre*, l. 186. In line 584, *fōūrth* is apparently pronounced as a dissyllable.

In Chaucer, words now ending in *-ion* ended in *-ioun*, and cases in which this ending becomes one syllable are very rare. But in this short poem there are several instances of the fusion of these syllables, while the accent is thrown earlier in the word, a sure mark of work considerably later than Chaucer. See lines 265, 266, *nācion*, *rēputācion*; lines 58, 60, 61, *saluācion*, *permutācion*, *consolūcion*. The general tendency of all these examples is to show that the language was passing into a later stage, in which the accent was being gradually shifted further forward.

The placing of the accent on the unaccented syllable, as in the words *mortūl*, l. 1, *besȝ*, l. 124, *wofūl*, l. 184, and some others, is very frequently found in the poems of Occleve, and is a characteristic of his work. Cf. his *Letter of Cupid*:—

l. 2. "The gentyl kynrede of *goddēs* on hye."

l. 4. "And al *mortūl* folke seruen busely."

### C. ALLITERATION.

From the earliest times, when alliteration was an essential characteristic of English metre, it has always been much used, especially by our greater poets. Chaucer in his works shows great skill in his handling of it; we also find it is common in Lydgate, who is particularly fond of alliterating formulæ. But in the *Lamentation*, alliteration is by no means strongly marked. We have no instance where it seems to be deliberately introduced for the sake of poetic effect. The only approach to it is in certain more or less stereotyped expressions. Examples of these are:—l. 50, "ful sorie and ful sadde,"—l. 116, "from toppē to the too,"—l. 204, "riful Roode,"—l. 213, "I syghed and sore sobbed,"—l. 252, "man without mercy,"—l. 267, "these wicked wretches, these houndes of hel,"—l. 308, "His blyssed body,"—l. 315, "O gentil Jesu,"—

l. 400, "walke and wander,"—with a few more examples of like nature.

#### d. METRICAL FORM.

The metrical form of the *Lamentation* is that of the 7 line stanza, formerly brought to great harmonious perfection by Chaucer, and afterwards adopted by Lydgate as his favourite metre, and as such employed in the majority of his poems. This metre was also used by Occleve, Sir Richard Ros, Henryson, James I. of Scotland, Dunbar, Hawes and others of Chaucer's successors. Each stanza consists of 7 five-beat lines, with the sequence of rimes *a b a b b c c*.

#### e. SCANSION.

I. The normal line consists of five unaccented syllables, alternating with five accented syllables. There may be an additional unaccented syllable at the end of the line. The *cæsura* usually comes after the second accented syllable. Ex :—

(1) *Ālās fōr wō || tō whōm shāl I cōmplēyn.*

(2) *This sōdayne chāunce || pērsēth mȳ hērtē sō dēpe.*

In (2) note a slight variation formed by reversing the accent in the word "pērsēth." This is quite allowable, and occurs even more often in the *first* foot of the line. Ex :—

(3) *Plōnged īn thē wāwē || of mōrtāl dīstrēsse.*

(4) *Āftēr hīs grēat pāssyōn || ānd dēthe crūēl.*

II. Another type consists of a line beginning with two unaccented syllables ; there are only a few examples of this throughout the poem.

(1) *Frō mē wōfūl Māry || wōfūl Māgdālēyne.*

(2) *Thūs I mūste bēwāyle || Dōlōrēm mēūm.*

III. There are some instances of the first (unaccented) syllable in a line being wholly wanting. Ex :—

(1) *Whō hāth hīm || thūs āgāyne bētrāyde.*

(2) *Thēre is nō || cūre tō mȳ sāluāciōn.*

(This line is probably imperfect.)

(3) *Ōnēs if I might || with hīm spēke.*

(4) *Thōugh I mōurne || it is nō grēat wōndēr.*

(5) *With thēir vēngēaunce || īnsāciāble.*

(6) *Nēuēr mān wās bōrne || thāt fēlte sūche wō.*

IV. Note that all these lines just given, except the two last examples, are also instances of the "clashing" lines common as one of Lydgate's types of scansion, *i.e.*, an unaccented syllable is wanting after the *cæsura*, thus causing two accented syllables to come together. My reason for thinking that (4) is not an exception to these, is that the line with which it rimes is as follows :—

*And nōw I thinke || wē bē sō fārre āsōndēr.*

Here the final *e* in *thinke* seems to be mute, therefore it is probable that the final *e* in *mourne* was mute also.

But instances also occur of clashing lines which have *not* suffered elision of the first syllable, and which therefore may be considered a fourth type.

- (1) Mōst bēautīful || prince of āl mǎnkȳnde.
  - (2) Cōnsīdrīng lō || mȳ lōrdēs ābsence.
  - (3) Whīch rūfūl sȳght || whan Ī gān bēhōlde.
  - (4) Bōthe hēuen ānd ērth || might hāue hērde mē crȳe.
  - (5) Ās pēoplē of mōste vȳle || rēpūtaciōn.
- V. Some lines have an extra unaccented syllable inserted.
- (1) My hērtē īs wōundēd || hērōn tō thinke of mūse.
  - (2) Tō sātīsfīe thēir mālīce || thēy wēre fūl bēsȳ.
  - (3) Thēy spīt īn hīs fāce || thēy smōtē hēre ānd thēre.
  - (4) Rīuēd ā sōndēr || for thēir grēat vȳōlence.
  - (5) Ās hē hād sȳd || īn hīs spēcīāl rēmēmbrāunce.
  - (6) Fār wēl Māgdālēn || dēpārte mūt Ī nēdes hēns.
- (But here *Magdalen* was no doubt pronounced *Maudleyn*)
- (7) Pārtyng ā sōndēr || thē flēsshē frō thē bōne.
  - (8) With chrīstāl wātēr || brōught out of pārādȳse.

It will be seen from these and many more examples, that the extra syllable usually comes just before or after the cæsura.

Of all these types, we may regard I as the normal, and IV. and V. as the commonest variations. Thus there is more regularity about the metre than might appear at first sight, though it is very different indeed from the harmonious, even flow of Chaucer's lines.

#### f. CÆSURA.

Before leaving the question of metre, it is interesting to note this poet's use of the cæsura, which is occasionally marked by a perpendicular line in Thynne's edition of the poem. A few instances of this are the following :—

- (1) Ālās for wō | tō whōm shāl Ī cōmpleyn
- (2) Frō mē wōfūl Māry | wōfūl Māgdālēyne.
- (3) Thāt nōthȳng cān Ī dō | būt wāyle ānd wēpe.
- (4) Thīs pītōus chāuncē | hēre īn mȳ prēsēnce.
- (5) Thōugh hē bē fārre hēnce | and nōthȳng nȳe.

Of course these marks have little authoritative value, but we find, on examination, that they are usually rightly inserted. Occasionally, however, a different reading might be preferred.

The cæsura thus generally occurs in one of three places.

- i. After the second accented syllable. (1).
- ii. After the third unaccented syllable. (2), (4).
- iii. After the third accented syllable. (3), (5).

This latter occurs much more seldom, yet the fact that it *does* occur shows the influence of Chaucer on his disciples, in introducing the moveable pause. This idea he borrowed from



the Italian poets, notably Dante, and used with great effect, to prevent monotony of rhythm. The French custom hitherto had been to mark the cæsura uniformly after the 4th syllable in the line. Hence we find that late in life, Chaucer is bold in varying its position. Thus, this variation is not marked in the *Man of Lawe's tale*, but is clearly shown in the *Knight's tale*.

The redundant syllable before the cæsura was often found both in Chaucer and Lydgate, and was later used by the Elisabethan dramatists. The clash of two accented syllables before and after the cæsura has been already noticed as a characteristic of Lydgate and of this poem. The cæsura after the 4th syllable, commonly used in French poetry, was preferred by Lydgate. As the cæsura implies a *pause*, redundant syllables can occur after it, just as they can at the end of the line.

V. *Comparison with other Poets and Poems.*—It will now be interesting to see what can be discovered concerning the *Lamentation* by comparing it with the work of other well-known poets.

#### a. CHAUCER.

With regard to Chaucer, it has been abundantly proved already from the poorness of the metre, the frequent loss of the final *e*, and the occasional false rimes, not only that it was not written by him, but that it was written considerably later. The poem does not even seem to owe much to his writings in any way, as there are no examples of any striking Chaucerian expressions. So far as he has had any influence at all upon the author, it appears only to have been through the medium of some of his disciples, such as Lydgate and Occleve.

#### b. LYDGATE.

For there are distinct traces in this work that the writer has chosen Lydgate, who was very popular in his time, as a model in many respects. We have already noted the occurrence of peculiar words (see p. 11), that the poems of Lydgate had brought into more frequent usage. A more detailed comparison with *The Temple of Glas* and the *Complaint of the Black Knight*, will give further evidence of imitation on the side of metre.

*Comparison with the Complaint of the Black Knight.*—At first sight there seems a general resemblance between these poems, both of which are written in the well-known 7-line stanza. But we may note the following points with regard to the *Black Knight*.

(1) *Lydgate's Metre.*—In his edition of Lydgate's *Temple of Glas*, p. lvii., Schick gives five types of Lydgate's five beat line.

A. The regular type, five iambs with an extra syllable sometimes added, and a well-defined cæsure usually after the second foot.

Ex. For thóust, constréint, || and gréuous héuines [se']

B. Lines with the trochaic cæsure, built like the preceding, but with an extra syllable before the cæsure.

Ex. And máni a stóri, || mo pén I rékin cán.

C. The peculiarly Lydgatian type, in which the thesis is wanting in the cæsure, so that two accented syllables clash together.

Ex. For spéchelés || nóthing máist pou spéde.

D. The acephalous line, in which the first syllable has been cut off, thus leaving a monosyllabic first measure.

Ex. Unto hír, and tó hir éxcellencé.

E. Lines with trisyllabic first measure.

Ex. Thát wás féipful founð, til hém depártid dépe.

The two last types are very rare.

*Examples of above types from the Black Knight.*

A. And hértés hévy || fôr to récomfôrte. l. 8.

B. In Máy whan Flóra || the frésshe lústy quéne. l. 1.

C. And mány a trée— || mó than Í can télle. l. 74.

D. Gréne láurer, || ánd the hóolsom pýne. l. 65.

E. Ēvēn át the déth, || through-gírt with mány a wóunde.

This line, 291, seems the only possible example of this type in the poem.

If these types are compared with the examples of scansion from the *Lamentation*, already given above (p. 21), it will be found that they closely agree, type A representing the normal type in the *Lamentation*, and types B and C the commonest variations. The clashing line in particular, type C, is of fairly frequent occurrence in our poem.

(2) *Final e*.—Dr. Schick proves from very many examples that Lydgate still pronounced the final *e* in the main as Chaucer, adding, "Thus Lydgate decidedly stands in point of language, as in everything else, on the mediæval side of the great gulf that intervenes between Chaucer and the new school of poetry which arose in the 16th century."

(3) *Language*.—This has the following main characteristics:

a. Frequent use of Chaucerian words and expressions

For instances of Chaucerian words, we can note *swogh*, *abreyde*, *gruffe*, etc., in the *Black Knight*; while for more general resemblances in expressions, compare the opening stanzas of the same poem with the first lines of the *Prologue* to the *Canterbury Tales*, and lines 218—224 with the description of the Temple of Mars, in the *Knight's Tale*.

References to some of Chaucer's heroes are also illustrated

in the *Black Knight's* allusions to Palamon, Arcite, Jason and Medea, Eneas, Theseus, etc.

b. Owing to his choice of words, Lydgate's vocabulary strikes us as being much more *modern* than that of Chaucer. The latter uses many concrete Old English terms, which are now obsolete, whereas the former employs many abstract words of French or Latin origin, which are still in use, or at least intelligible. This is one of the points which Schick brings forward very clearly, in his criticism of this author's style.

c. The *range* of Lydgate's vocabulary is very extensive. In this respect especially, he shows a marked contrast to the poet of the *Lamentation*.

(4.) *Classical Allusions*.—There is abundant proof in this poem alone of Lydgate's acquaintance with the Classics. As instances, we may take his mention of Narcissus, Cupid, Pegasus, Diana and Acteon, Venus, Mars, Adonis, Niobe and others. Cf. also, "As straight as a Ram's horn," Lydgate's *Minor Poems*, ed. Halliwell, p. 171; "The legend of St. Austin at Compton," p. 135; "On the wretchedness of worldly affairs," p. 122; "Processioun of Corpus Christi," p. 95; "Devotions of the Fowls," p. 78. On the other hand, the author of the *Lamentation*, either from necessity or design, carefully refrains from any allusion to classical heroes or pagan mythology.

(5) *Personification*.—As one other characteristic of Lydgate's work, we may note his introduction of allegorical personages, typifying the different virtues and vices. Instances of this are Malebouche, Fals-report, Disdayne, and Trouthe. There is no trace of any attempt at personification of abstract qualities throughout the *Lamentation*.

For further observations on the *Complaint of the Black Knight*, see the Dissertation by Emil Krausser, Halle, 1896.

*Lydgate's Testament*.—As both the *Temple of Glas* and the *Black Knight* are among Lydgate's earlier poems, it is advisable to examine also his *Testament*, given among his *Minor Poems*, Halliwell's edition, p. 232. We may assuredly conclude that this is one of his later works, from the way in which he speaks of himself.

P. 239. "Among othre I that am falle in age.

Gretly feblissed of oold infirmyte,

Crye unto Jhesu for my sinful outrages."

Again, p. 240, "Age is crope in, callith me to my grave." With regard to the date of his death, Halliwell says, Introduction, p. vi., "It is very improbable that he survived as long as the year 1482, although most writers place the date of his death in that year . . . From the MSS. which remain of his



its various kinds of birds and flowers, but the author of the *Lamentation* makes no reference whatever to external Nature.

(6) Lydgate has several reminiscences of Chaucer, such as the lines on p. 243, 244, which at once recall the beginning of Chaucer's *Prologue* :

“Whiche sesoun prykethe fresshe corages . . .

First Zephyrus with his blastys soote,

Enspireth Ver with newe buddys greene,

The bawme ascendith out of every roote,

Causyng with flowrys ageyn the sonne sheene.”

The *Lamentation*, on the other hand, contains no striking characteristic Chaucerian expression.

(7) Lydgate in his *Minor Poems* shows a marked preference for a refrain. Thus out of the 44 poems in Halliwell's edition, 28 are written with a refrain throughout, and in the remaining 16 are found occasionally short rondels, or a refrain lasting through two or three stanzas. But in the *Lamentation* there are no traces of a refrain of any kind.

Two other works of Lydgate's are worth a short consideration, as being specimens of his religious poetry, which probably had more influence on the author of the *Lamentation* than his secular and political ballads.

One of these is Lydgate's *Life of St. Edmund*, given in Horstmann's *Altenglische Legenden*, p. 378, which, as the author tells us, was translated from the Latin, and was written in the year when King Henry VI. held a Christmas festival at Bury. The monk of Bury evidently took much personal interest in all these doings, and in the patron saint of the place. The characteristics of this poem are, that the final *e* is sometimes sounded, the final *es* usually, and the final *ed* seldom. No refrain is introduced, and there are no marked traces of alliteration. To the *Life* there is prefixed an invocation to the Saint, in which he is compared to the carbuncle, sapphire, ruby, amethyst, and emerald. The ending *-ioun* still receives its full value, the accent being on the last syllable. The marks of language thus show that the poem was a little earlier than the *Lamentation*, while with the Invocation we may compare lines 680—684 in the latter work.

Lydgate's *Ballade in Commendation of Our Lady* is given in Chalmers' *British Poets*, p. 546. With regard to the language, we find that final *e* is commonly sounded, and final *es* usually, but not always, thus again showing that the poem is a little earlier than the *Lamentation*. Alliteration is frequent, but there is no refrain. It is possible that Lydgate thought the refrain less suitable as a rule to religious poems than to secular ballads. Hence, if the author of the *Lamentation* studied Lydgate's religious poems chiefly, we can easily under-

stand the absence of a refrain in the latter work, at a time when it was affected by most poets of the day.

Another point of importance with regard to the *Commendation of Our Lady* is, that although Lydgate's work is much richer in wealth of language and allusions, there is a great general similarity of tone between the two poems. Beneath the extravagance of Lydgate's adoration of the Virgin, there are suggested at times faint touches of a spiritualised earthly passion, while the Magdalene's persistent lament for her spouse occasionally hints at a personal regret chastened into religious emotion.

The Invocation introduced into the *Commendation* is interesting as containing the following comparisons.

"O rody *rosier*, flowering without spine."

"Trusty *turtle*, truefastest of all true."

"*Ruby* rubified in the passion

Of thy sonne."

"Semely *saphre*."

With these, compare lines 564, 674, 679, 682, 683 in the *Lamentation*. Note that although Lydgate mentions many other birds, the *turtledove* is the only one spoken of here, just as the *rose* and *lily* are the only flowers. All other comparisons are to gold, pearl and precious stones. These facts are significant as suggesting that the author's experience of life may have been a narrow one.

*Summary.* To sum up the chief points of comparison between the *Lamentation* and Lydgate's poems, we are guided to the conclusion that, although the work in question bears many resemblances to that of Lydgate, the marks of greater laxity in the treatment of final *e* and *es*, together with a far narrower range of thought and extent of culture, prove that it is not a production of the master himself, but of one of his later disciples.

#### c. OCCLEVE.

Resemblances between the *Lamentation* and the work of Occleve are much less marked than in the case of Lydgate. The only striking feature which both authors have in common is the practice of throwing the accent frequently on an unaccented syllable. Instances of these from the *Lamentation* have already been given. In Occleve's *De Regimine Principum*, Stanza 600, we have:—

"Alle that they axed haden they redý,  
And they euer were on hym gredý."

The chief differences are:—

(1) In Occleve the final *e* is usually sounded, and the final *es* very frequently. See stanza 299.

"Thē stēppēs of Vīrgile in pōysye."

St. 603. "Hīs sōnēs bōthe ānd hīs dōughtērs ālsō."

St. 606. "Ūntō hīs chēst, which thrē lōkkēs hādde."

It has been shown that in the *Lamentation* the final *e* is frequently dropped, and final *es* is usually mute.

(2) Occleve's vocabulary is much larger and wider than that of the author of the *Lamentation*. It is also very different in kind, as Occleve uses many more English, and fewer Romance words.

We have therefore no reason for assigning the poem to Occleve or to any imitator of his, and the whole weight of evidence goes to prove that the *Lamentation* is decidedly later than his time. He died about 1454.

#### d. THE CRAFT OF LOVERS.

There is one anonymous poem, called *The Craft of Lovers*, printed in Chalmers' *British Poets*, vol. I., p. 560, which may furnish important evidence, as it is dated in 1448. The general style of it is different to that of the *Lamentation*, and it introduces refrains, but the test of language is important. The final *e* is occasionally sounded, and the final *es* varies, being sometimes sounded and sometimes mute. A distinctively late mark is the pronunciation of such words as *inspēction*, *corrēction*, *adulūtion*, *supplicūtion*, with the accent thrown forward as in modern English. These facts collectively tend to show that it was written but little earlier than the *Lamentation*, and we therefore arrive at about 1450 as the *earliest* limit of time for the poem in question.

#### e. HAWES.

Let us now examine *The Passetyme of Pleasure*, a poem composed about 1506 by Stephen Hawes, a disciple of Lydgate. The whole tone of this poem is also decidedly more modern than the *Lamentation*, and is a foreshadowing of Spenser, but an examination of the language gives the following results.

(1) The final *e* does not appear to be sounded.

(2) The final *ed* is occasionally sounded distinctly.

Cap. XXXIII. v. 7. "Mȝ grēyhoūndes lēpēd, ānd mȝ stēde dīd stēte."

id. "Thrē hēdes hē hād, ānd hē ārmēd wās."

v. 14. "Wīth fāynēd kindnēs wē dō hēr sō blȳnde."

(5) The final *es* is sometimes sounded distinctly, but more often not.

v. 16. "Būt hē mȝ strōkēs mīght rīght wēll ēndūre."

v. 20. "Fayre gōldēn Phēbūs, with hīs beāmēs rēad."

v. 21. "Wīth āl mȝ fōrce cūt of hīs hēdēs thrē."

Thus the conclusion arrived at is that the language of the

*Lamentation* is not very much earlier than that of Hawes. And though the language is somewhat earlier, there is not much to prove that the metre is.

## VI. THEORY OF DATE.

The results of this investigation may be thus summarised.

1. It is impossible to place the *Lamentation* in the first half of the 15th century. Taking as ultimate limits the date of *The Craft of Lovers*, 1448, and the date of the *Passetyme of Pleasure*, about 1506, the period 1460—1480 suggests itself as the approximate date of the poem.

2. The style of the poem does not agree with that of any well-known piece, anonymous or otherwise.

## VII. ALLUSIONS AND LEGENDS.

One point of interest remaining is the author's indebtedness to earlier authorities for the material of the poem, and general treatment of the legends connected with the Magdalene.

1. The Latin quotations, the introduction of which is a marked feature in the work, are taken from the Vulgate, and more especially from the poetical books of the Old Testament and the Gospels.

2. The mention of "a blynde Knight men called Longias," l. 176, is interesting, as Longius is mentioned once by Chaucer and three or four times by Lydgate in his *Minor Poems*. The origin of the legend is given by Professor Skeat, in his edition of the *Vision of Piers Plowman*, C. Passus XXI. 82 (note). See also his *Chaucer*, Vol. I. p. 457.

3. In the substance of the poem, the author has kept very simply to the scriptural account in John xx. 11—18, assuming at the same time that Mary Magdalene is identical with Mary the sister of Lazarus and Martha; see lines 583—5. The statement of her intention to go into the wilderness, l. 330, might at first suggest a confusion with St. Mary of Egypt, but all these facts concerning the Magdalene's life can really be obtained from the version of the story given in the *Early South-English Legendary*, edited by Horstmann, p. 462, and in his "*Sammlung Altenglischer Legenden*," p. 148. This is a very old poem, originally in the East Midland dialect. The summary in the headings will give a clear outline of the substance of the legend. (The story is also given in *Legends of the Saints*, Scottish Text Society, 1888, pp. 256—284. Cf. also Caxton's *Golden Legend*.)

"Mary Magdalene was born in the castle of Magdala. Lazarus was her brother, and Martha her sister. Mary



Magdalene's parents go to their long home. Their property is divided among their three children. Mary Magdalene is so sinful that she gets a bad name. She repents, and goes to meet Christ with an ointment. She kisses Christ's feet, washes and wipes them. He reproves Judas and Simon the Leper for objecting. Christ forgives Mary Magdalene and drives seven devils out of her. He cures her sister Martha. Mary Magdalene converts folk. She and other Christians are driven out of Judea and put, foodless, in a ship. They land at Marseilles. She preaches Christ to the idol-worshippers of Marseilles, and bids them believe on Him. Her Christian friends are left without food. She warns the Saracen queen and prince to get food. Mary Magdalene's folk are fed by the Saracen prince and his wife, who promise to be Christians if they get a son. The Saracen queen is with child. Her husband and she resolve to go to Rome. Mary Magdalene blesses them. On the voyage to Rome, the Saracen queen dies in childbirth. The babe has no milk. The Saracen prince leaves his dead wife and living child on a rock, and goes to Rome. The Pope welcomes and comforts him. St. Peter takes him to the Holy Land. St. Peter bids the Prince go back to Mary Magdalene, and be baptised. He finds his wife and child alive. Mary has kept the Saracen queen alive on the rock, taken her to the Holy Land, and brought her back. The Saracens are converted and baptised, and Mary goes into the wilderness for thirty years. Mary is daily lifted up toward heaven by angels. She tells her story to a hermit near her. She foretells her death, and is borne by angels to Bishop Maximus in Marseilles. They sing psalms. Mary Magdalene is shriven by Bishop Maximus, dies, and goes straight to heaven."

This legend was intended to be read on St. Mary Magdalene's day, July 22nd. It may be noted that several of the details are taken from the Life of St. Mary of Egypt.

### VIII. AUTHORSHIP.

With regard to the authorship of this poem, we have reached the negative conclusion, that it is not by any well-known author, but by some disciple of Lydgate. But from examining the substance and treatment of the work, it is possible to arrive at something more definite than this.

(1) The authorities familiar to the writer were :—

*a.* The Latin Vulgate, more especially the poetical books, such as the Psalms, Job, Song of Solomon, Lamentations—and the Gospels.

*b.* The legends of the Saints, especially St. Mary Magdalene, and Longius or Longinus.

c. The poems of Lydgate, more particularly the religious poems, which would perhaps be considered sufficiently devotional to be suitable as conventual literature. The probability that the author was *not* acquainted with Lydgate's secular ballads arises from the fact that there is in our poem no attempt at refrain, and no allusions to the world of external nature, the world of chivalry, the wealth of stories drawn from the classics and their mythology, or the world of imagination, in which allegorical figures, personified Virtues and Vices, played so large a part in those times. The absence of any reference to these things, even through the medium of another writer's influence, proves that the education and reading of our author must have been of a very limited and circumscribed character.

(2) If we next examine the only allusions to Nature occurring in this poem—"my turteldoue, so fresshe of hue"—"fayrer than rose, sweter than lylly flower"—and the preceding description of the Wilderness,

"Alone in woodes, in rocks, and in caues depe"—

"Rotes that growen on the craggy stone

Shal me suffyse with water of the lake,"—

we cannot imagine that the writer has had any experience of the beauties of natural scenery, the pleasures of a spring morning, the open-air life of the woods, which enters so largely into the poetry of Chaucer and his followers. A poet of this school would not have missed the splendid opportunity for a description at the beginning of this poem—the beautiful, lonely garden of Gethsemane—the dim, awed hush of the twilight just before dawn—the tall, silent trees and dewy grass and flowers—the first streaks of sunlight in the East, and all the early freshness of that Easter morning. We should probably even have been told the names of all the different kinds of trees in the garden, and the various meanings that the songs of the laverock, nightingale, turtle dove, popinjay and others, were intended to have for the ear of the sorrowing Magdalene. We cannot imagine that the crushing weight of some great grief had rendered the writer dead to all external influences of Nature; for a sorrow that had reached the stage of expressing itself in 714 lines, would, like Tennyson's "In Memoriam," have drawn all outward impressions into the circle of its emotion. Only the life-history of a cloistered monk or nun, placed from earliest childhood within the sheltering walls of the convent, and occupied by day and night in acts of devotion, could explain this apparent insensibility of a poetical nature to the manifold beauties of the earth.

(3) In the absence of any but internal evidence to decide, there seems every reason to suppose that this poem was written

by a woman, who was also a nun. Chaucer, that great student of human nature, was particularly successful in his analysis of different types of female character, and has left us several masterly and faithful portraits. But none of his disciples ever attained the same power. It is not found in the poems of the Monk of Bury, to whom all women were merely as types of angels to be worshipped, or sirens to be guarded against. Hence if any man, writing in those times, had sought to put himself in the place of a woman deprived of the object of her love, and give expression to the outpouring of her feelings, the probability is that he would have missed one or two curiously feminine traits that prevail in this poem. One of these is the varying change of moods through which the Magdalene passes:—the grief of loss, the bitter abuse of those who have caused it, sympathy with the physical sufferings of her beloved, a wild and vague desire to do something—anything, a wish to seek, and yet to avoid the society of the Virgin, renewed sense of loss, and resignation to approaching death. These changes show the subtle phases of a nature striving to luxuriate in its own capacity for emotion, and satisfy through imagination its craving for excitement.

Another trait is the prevalence throughout of strong personal feeling, restricted within a narrow range. It has been said that it is a characteristic of women to give general statements a personal application; and this is true, not merely of the intellectual, but of the emotional side of their nature, as is shown in the above poem.

It is also worth noting, that although there is throughout the tone of affectionate regret, there is no mention of past sins, repentance or remorse, which might have been included in a conception of the Magdalene's character. This suggests that the poem is written by a woman still young in years, who perhaps did not survive to accomplish any work more perfected in form or richer in mental experience.

The only known authoress of this period is the anonymous lady who wrote the *Flower and the Leaf*, perhaps also the *Assembly of Ladies*. As she is evidently a follower of the Diana whom she celebrates in her verse as queen, her style has nothing whatever in common with that of the pale dreamer of the Magdalene's sorrows. The next writer of any account is she who championed her sex in the spirited ballad of the *Nuthrown Maid*. Between these two, the Queen of Beauty at the tournament, and the nymph of the greenwood, there moves across the world's stage the shadowy figure of a young nun, to vanish unnoticed and unknown.

BERTHA M. SKEAT.

## MARIA MAGDALENA.

*(Freely translated from the Danish poem by CHRISTIAN K. F. MOLBECH,  
by W. W. SKEAT, in 1865).*

Lone, beside the wavy streamlet,  
Paced Maria Magdalena ;  
With the rest she had not followed,  
Knew not that the Lord had risen.

Lone, beside the wavy streamlet,  
Paced Maria Magdalena ;  
Lo ! the grief her breast doth harbour  
Fast in shining tears is streaming.

In the grove's dim depth she gathers  
Cypress-wreaths and canker-roses ;  
Twining still, with sighs of sorrow,  
Sprays and buds, to form a garland.

To the fatal mountain's summit  
Will Maria bear the garland :  
This shall be her mournful tribute,  
Latest gift of her affection.

With the blossoms' spreading fragrance  
Mingles she her sighs of sorrow ;  
Through the air on high ascending  
These shall tell her tale of anguish.

Hark ! a gentle voice she heareth—  
" Wherefore weepeth Zion's daughter ?  
What the grief, that thus conducts her  
Hither to the grove of cedars ? "

" Art thou he that tends the garden ?  
Say, I pray, where Jesus lieth ?  
In the grave he lies no longer  
'Neath the stones of weighty marble."

Hark ! the voice, in tones of kindness,  
Utters but the word " Maria."  
From her eyes that instant falleth  
Doubt's dim veil—at once she knows Him.

" 'Tis the Lord !"—with joy she kneeleth  
Where but now her tears were falling ;  
On his face her eyes are fastened,  
Gladly she her arms extendeth.

Backward drew the holy Jesus ;  
Nay, not yet may hand of mortal  
Dare to touch Him ; yet she weepeth  
O'er His feet sweet tears of gladness.

Lone, beside the wavy streamlet,  
Paced Maria Magdalena ;  
Lo ! the joy her breast doth harbour  
Sounds on high from lips that praise Him.

[NOTE.—The text of this poem is taken from Thynne's first edition, that of 1532. I have inserted punctuation marks, as they are not in the original. B.M.S.]

## THE LAMENTATYON OF MARY MAGDALEYNE.

Plonged in the wawe of mortal distresse,  
Alas for wo! to whom shal I compleyn?  
Or who shal deuoyde this great heynesse  
Fro me woful Mary, woful Magdaleyne?  
My lorde is gon: alas! who wrought this treyne? 5  
This sodayne chaunce perseth my herte so depe,  
That nothyng can I do but wayle and wepe.

My lorde is gone that here in graue was layde,  
After his great passyon and dethe cruel;  
Who hath him thus agayne betrayde? 10  
Or what man here aboute can me tel  
Where he is become, the prince of Israel,  
Jesus of Nazareth, my gostly socour,  
My parfyte loue and hope of al honour?

What creature hath him hence caryed? 15  
Or howe might this so sodainly befall?  
I wolde I had here with him taryed,  
And so shulde I have had my purpose al.  
I bought oyntmentes ful precious and royal,  
Wherwith I hoped his corps to \*anoynted, 20  
But he thus gone, my mynde is doynted.

Whyle I therefore aduertye and beholde  
This pytous chaunce here in my presence,  
Ful lytel maruayle though my herte be colde,  
Consydring, lo, my lordes absence. 25  
Alas! that I so ful of neglygence  
Shulde be founde, bycause I come so late;  
Al men may saye I am infortunate.

---

\* Insert [han].

Cause of my sorowe men may vnderstonde  
<sup>1</sup>(Quia tulerunt dominum meum). 30  
 Another is, that I ne may fonde,  
 I wot nere <sup>2</sup>Ubi posuerunt eum.  
 Thus I muste bewaile <sup>3</sup>Dolorem meum  
 With herty wepyng, I can no \*better deserue  
 Tyl dethe approche, my herte for to kerue. 35  
  
 My herte opprest with sodayne auenture,  
 By feruent anguysshe is bewrapped so,  
 That longe this lyfe I may nat endure,  
 Such is my payne, suche is my mortal wo.  
 Neuerthelesse, to what partie shal I go, 40  
 In hope to fynde myne owne turtyl true,  
 My lyues ioeye, my souerayne lorde Iesu ?  
  
 Sythe al my ioeye that I cal his presence  
 Is thus remoued, nowe I am ful of mone ;  
 Alas, the whyle ! I made no prouydence 45  
 For this mishap, wherefore I syghe and grone.  
 Socour to fynde, to what place might I gone ?  
 Fayne I wolde to some man my herte breke,  
 I not to whom I may complayne or speke.  
  
 Alone here I stande, ful sorie and ful sadde, 50  
 Whiche hoped to haue sene my lorde and kyng ;  
 Smal cause haue I to be mery or gladde,  
 Remembring this bytterful departyng.  
 In this worlde is no creature lyuyng  
 That was to me so good and gracious, 55  
 His loue also than golde more precious.  
  
 Full sore I syghe without comforte agayne,  
 There is no cure to my saluacion,  
 His brennyng loue my hert so dothe constrayne ;  
 Alas ! here is a woful permutacion, 60  
 Whereof I fynde no ioeye nor consolacion,  
 Therefore my payne al onely to confesse,  
 With dethe I feare wol ende my heuynesse.  
  
 This wo and anguysshe is intollerable,  
 If I byde here, lyfe can I nat sustayne ; 65  
 If I go hence, my paynes be vncurable ;  
 Where him to fynde, I knowe no place certayne.  
 And thus I not of these thynges twayne  
 Whiche I may take, and whiche I may refuse,  
 My herte is wounded heron to thinke or muse. 70

A while I shal stande in this mournyng,  
 In hope if any visyon wol appere,  
 That of my loue might tel some good tydyng,  
 Whiche in-to ioy might chaunge my wepyng chere.  
 I trust in his grace and his mercy dere; 75  
 But at the leest, though I therwith me kyl,  
 I shal nat spare to wayle and wepe my fyl.

And if that I dye in suche auenture,  
 I can no more but welcome as my chaunce,  
 My bones shal rest here in this sepulture, 80  
 My lyfe, my dethe, is at his ordynaunce.  
 It shal be tolde in \*euerlastyng remembraunce,  
 Thus to departe is to me no shame,  
 And also thereof I am nothyng to blame.

Hope agaynst me hath her course ytake. 85  
 There is no more, but thus shal I dye.  
 I se right wel my lorde hath me forsake,  
 But in my conceyte cause knowe I none why :  
 Though he be farre hence and nothing nye,  
 Yet my woful herte after him dothe seke, 90  
 And causeth teeres to ren downe by my cheke.

Thynkyng, alas! I haue loste his presence,  
 Whiche in this worlde was al my sustenaunce,  
 I crye and cal with herty dilygence,  
 But there is no wight gyueth attendaunce, 95  
 Me to certifye of myne enquiryraunce :  
 Wherefore I wyl to al this worlde bewraye  
 Howe that my lorde is slayne and borne awaye.

Though I mourne, it is no great wonder,  
 Sythe he is al my ioye in special; 100  
 And nowe I thynke, we be so farre a-sonder,  
 That him to se I feare neuer I shal.  
 It helpeth no more after him to cal,  
 Ne after him to enquire in any coste :  
 Alas! howe is he thus gone and loste? 105

The iewes, I thynke, ful of misery,  
 Sette in malyce by their besy cure  
 With force and might of gyleful trechery,  
 Hath entermyned my lordes sepulture,  
 And borne away that precious fygure, 110  
 Leuyng of it nothyng; if they haue done so,  
 Marred I am : alas! what shal I do?

With their vengeaunce insaciabie  
 Nowe haue they him entreated so,  
 That to reporte it is to lamentable; 115  
 They bete his body from toppe to the too.  
 Neuer man was borne that felte suche wo!  
 They wounded him, alas! with al greuaunce,  
 The bloode down reyled in most habundaunce.

The bloody rowes stremed downe ouer al, 120  
 They him assayled so malyciously  
 With their scourges and strokes beestyal;  
 They spared nat, but smote incessauntly.  
 To \*satisfye their malyce they were ful besy;  
 They spyt in his face, they smote here and there, 125  
 He groned ful sore, and swette many a tere.

They crowned him with thornes sharpe and kene,  
 The vaynes rent, the bloode ran down a-pace,  
 With bloode ouercome were bothe his eyen,  
 And bolne with strokes was his blessed face; 130  
 They him entreated as men without grace,  
 They kneled to him, and made many a scorne,  
 Lyke helhoundes they haue him al to-torne.

Vpon a mighty crosse in length and brede,  
 These turmentours shewed their cursydnesse, 135  
 They nayled him without pyte or drede,  
 His precious bloode brast out in largenesse.  
 They strayned him along as men mercilesse,  
 The very ioyntes al, to myne apparence,  
 Ryued a-sonder for their great vyolence. 140

Al this I beholdyng with myn eyen twayne,  
 Stode there besyde with ruful attendaunce,  
 And euer me thought he, beyng in that payne,  
 Loked on me with dedly countenaunce,  
 As he had sayd in his special remembraunce, 145  
 "Farwel, Magdalen, departe must I nedes hens,  
 My herte is <sup>1</sup>Tanquam cera liquescens."

Whiche ruful syght whan I gan beholde,  
 Out of my wytte I almoste distraught,  
 Tare my heere, my handes wrange and folde, 150  
 And of that sight my hert dranke such a draught  
 That many a fal swounyng there I caught;  
 I brused my body fallyng on the grounde,  
 Whereof I fele many a greuouse wounde.



Than these wretches, ful of al frowardnesse, 155  
 Gaue him to drinke eyssel tempred with gal :  
 Alas ! that poyson ful of bytternesse  
 My loues chere caused than to appal.  
 And yet therof might he nat drinke at al,  
 But spake these wordes, as him thought best, 160  
 "Father of heuen, <sup>1</sup> Consummatum est."

Than kneled I downe in paynes outrage,  
 Clyppying the crosse within myn armes twayn,  
 His bloode distylled downe on my vysage,  
 My clothes eke the droppes dyd distayne. 165  
 To haue dyed for him I wolde ful fayne,  
 But what shulde it auayle if I dyd so,  
 Sythe he is <sup>2</sup> Suspensus in patibulo ?

Thus my lorde ful dere was al disgysed  
 With bloode, payne, and woundes many one, 170  
 His veynes brast, his ioyntes al to-ryued,  
 Partyng a-sonder the flesshe fro the bone ;  
 But I sawe he hynge nat there alone,  
 For <sup>3</sup> Cum iniquis deputatus est,  
 Nat lyke a man, but lyke a leprous beest. 175

A blynde knight men called Longias,  
 With a speare aproched vnto my souerayne,  
 Launsyng his syde ful pytously, alas !  
 That his precious herte he claue in twayne.  
 The purple bloode eke fro the hertes wayne 180  
 Downe rayled right faste in most ruful wyse,  
 With christal water brought out of paradyse.

Whan I behelde this woful passyon,  
 I wote nat howe by sodayne auenture  
 My herte was peersed with very compassyon, 185  
 That in me remayned no lyfe of nature ;  
 Strokes of dethe I felte without measure,  
 My dethes wound I caught, with wo opprest,  
 And brought to poynt as my herte shuld brest.

The wounde hert and blood of my darlyng 190  
 Shal neuer slyde fro my \*remorial ;  
 The bytter paynes also of tourmentyng  
 Within my soule be grauen principal.  
 The speare, alas ! that was so sharpe withal,  
 So thrilled my herte as to my felyng, 195  
 That body and soule were at departyng.

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1 Joan. xix. 30. 2 Esth. vii, D. 10. 3 Luc. xxii. D. 38. \* For *memorial* ?

As sone as I might, I releued vp agayne,  
 My brethe I coude nat very wel restore,  
 Felyng my selfe drowned in so great payne,  
 Both body and soule me thought were al to-tore ; 200  
 Vyolent falles greued me right sore,  
 I wepte, I bledde, and with my selfe I fared  
 As one that for his lyfe nothyng had cared.

I, loking vp to that ruful Roode,  
 Sawe first the vysage pale of that fygure, 205  
 But so pytous a syght, spotted with bloode,  
 Sawe neuer yet no lyueng creature ;  
 So it exceded the boundes of measure,  
 That mannes mynde, with al his wyttes fyue,  
 Is nothyng able that payne for to discryue. 210

Than gan I there myne armes to vnbrace,  
 Vp lyftyng my handes ful mournyngly,  
 I syghed and sore sobbed in that place,  
 Bothe heuen and erth might haue herde me crye,  
 Wepying, and sayd "alas !" incessauntly ; 215  
 Ah my swete herte, my gostly paramour,  
 Alas, I may nat thy body socour !

O blessed lorde, howe feirse and howe cruel  
 These cursed wightes nowe hath the slayne,  
 Keruyng, alas ! thy body euerydel, 220  
 Wounde within wounde, ful bytter is thy payne ;  
 Nowe wolde that I might to the attayne,  
 To nayle my body fast vnto thy tree,  
 So that of this payne thou might go free.

I can nat reporte ne make no rehersayle 225  
 Of my demenyng with the cyrcumstaunce,  
 But wel I wote the speare with euery nayle  
 Thirled my soule by inwarde ressemblaunce,  
 Whiche neuer shal out of my remembraunce ;  
 Duryng my lyfe it wol cause me to wayle, 230  
 As ofte as I \*remenbre that batayle.

Ah ye iewes, worse than dogges rabyate,  
 What moued you thus cruelly him to aray ?  
 He neuer displeased you, nor caused debate,  
 Your loue and true hertes he coueyted aye, 235  
 He preched, he teched, he shewed the right waye ;  
 Wherefore ye, lyke tyrantes wode and waywarde  
 Now haue him thus slayne for his rewarde.

Ye ought to haue remembred one thyng special,  
 His fauour, his grace and his magnifycence, 240  
 He was your prince borne, and lord ouer al,  
 Howe be it ye toke him in smal reuerence ;  
 He was ful meke in suffryng your offence,  
 Nevertheles ye deuoured him with one assent,  
 As hungry wolues doth the lambe innocent. 245

Where was your pyte, o people mercylesse,  
 Armyng your selfe with falsheed and treason ?  
 On my lorde ye haue shewed your woodnesse,  
 Lyke no men, but beestes without reason.  
 Your malyce he suffred al for the season, 250  
 Your payne wol come, thynke it nat to slacke ;  
 Man without mercy of mercy shal lacke.

O ye traytours and maintayners of madnesse,  
 Vnto your folly I ascribe al my paine ;  
 Ye haue me depriued of ioye and gladnesse, 255  
 So dealing with my lorde and souerayne.  
 Nothyng shulde I nede thus to complayne  
 If he had lyued in peace and tranquillyte,  
 Whom ye haue slayne through your iniquite.

Farwel your nobleness, that somtyme dyd rayne, 260  
 Farewel your worshyp, glorie and fame,  
 Here-after to lyue in hate and disdayne,  
 Maruayle ye nat for your trespas and blame ;  
 Vnto shame is turned al your good name,  
 Vpon you nowe woll wonder euery nacion, 265  
 As people of moste vyle reputacion.

These wicked wretches, these houndes of hel,  
 As I have tolde playne here in this sentence,  
 Were nat content my dere loue thus to quel,  
 But yet they muste embesyle his presence ; 270  
 As I perceyue, by couert vyolence  
 They haue him conueyed, to my displesure,  
 For here is lafte but naked sepulture.

Wherefore of truthe and rightful iugement,  
 That their malyce agayne may be acquyted, 275  
 After my verdyte and auysement,  
 Of false murder they shal be endyted :  
 Of thefte also, whiche shal nat be respyted,  
 And in al hāste they shal be hanged and drawe ;  
 I wol my selfe plede this cause in the lawe. 280

Alas ! if I with true attendaunce  
 Had styl abydden with my lordes corse,  
 And kept it stil with trewe perceuraunce,  
 Than had nat befall this woful deuorse.  
 But as for my payne, welcome and no force ; 285  
 This shal be my songe where so euer I go,  
 Departyng is grounde of al my wo.

I se right wel nowe in my paynes smerte,  
 There is no wounde of so greuous dolour,  
 As is the wounde of my careful herte, 290  
 Sythe I haue loste thus my paramour ;  
 Al swetnesse is tourned in-to sour,  
 Myrthe to my herte nothyng may conuey,  
 But he that beareth thereof bothe locke and key.

The ioye excellent of blyssed paradyse 295  
 Maye me, alas ! in no wyse recomforte ;  
 Songe of angel nothyng may me suffyse  
 As in myne herte nowe to make disporte.  
 Al I refuse but that I might resorte  
 Vnto my loue, the wel of goodlyheed, 300  
 For whose longyng I trowe I shalbe deed.

Of paynful labour and tourment corporal  
 I make thereof none exceptioun ;  
 Paynes of hel I wol passe ouer al,  
 My loue to fynde in myne affectioun, 305  
 So great to him is my delectatioun :  
 A thousande tymes martred wolde I be,  
 His blyssed body ones if I might se.

About this worlde, so large in al compace,  
 I shal nat spare to renne my lyfe duryng, 310  
 My fete also shal nat rest in one place,  
 Tyl of my loue I may here some tidying,  
 For whose absence my handes nowe I wryng :  
 To thynke on him cease shal neuer my mynd.  
 O gentyl Iesu, where shal I the fynde ? 315

Ierusalem wol I sertche place fro place,  
 Syon, the vale of Iosophath also ;  
 And if I fynde him nat in al this space,  
 By mount Olyuet to Bethany wol I go ;  
 These wayes wol I wander and many mo, 320  
 Nazareth, Bethleem, Mountana, Iude,  
 No traueyle shal me payne him for to se.

His blyssed face if I might se and fynde,  
 Sertche I wolde euery coste and countrey,  
 The fardest parte of Egipt or hote Inde, 325  
 Shulde be to me but a lytel iourney.  
 Howe is he thus gone or taken away?  
 Yf I knewe the ful trouthe and certente,  
 Yet from this care released might I be.

In-to wyldernesse I thynke best to go, 330  
 Sith I can no more tidynges of him here;  
 There may I my lyfe lede to and fro,  
 There may I dwel, and to no man appere;  
 To towne ne vyllage wol I come nere,  
 Alone in woodes, in rockes, and in caues depe, 335  
 I may at myne owne wyl both wayle and wepe.

Myne eyen twayne, withouten varyaunce,  
 Shal neuer cease, I promyse faithfully,  
 There to wepe with great abundaunce  
 Bytter teares rennyng incessauntly, 340  
 The whiche teares medled ful pitously  
 With the very blode euer shal renne also,  
 Expressyng in myne herte the greuous wo.

Worldly fode and sustenaunce I desyre none,  
 Suche lyueng as I fynde, suche wol I take; 345  
 Rotes that growen on the craggy stone  
 Shal me suffyse, with water of the lake.  
 Than thus may I say for my lordes sake,  
<sup>1</sup>(Fuerunt mihi lachryme <sup>2</sup>me)  
 (In deserto panes, die ac nocte). 350

My body to clothe it maketh no force,  
 A mournyng mantel shalbe suffycient;  
 The greuous woundes of his pytous corse  
 Shalbe to me a ful royal garnement:  
 He departed, thus I am best content. 355  
 His crosse with nayles and scourges withal  
 Shalbe my thought and payne special.

Thus wol I lyue, as I haue here tolde,  
 If I may any longe tyme endure, 360  
 But I feare dethe is ouer me so bolde,  
 That of my purpose I can nat be sure;  
 My paynes encrease without measure,  
 For of longe lyfe who can lay any reason?  
 Al thyng is mortal and hath but a season.

I syghe ful sore, and it is ferre yfet, 365  
 Myne herte I fele nowe bledeth inwardly,  
 The bloody teares I may in no wyse let,  
 Sithe of my payne I fynde no remedy.  
 I thanke god of al if I nowe dye ;  
 His wyl perfourmed, I holde me content, 370  
 My soule let him take that hath it me lent.

For lenger to endure it is intollerable,  
 My woful herte is enflamed so huge,  
 That no sorowe to myne is comparable,  
 Sithe of my mynde I fynde no refuge. 375  
 Yet I him requyre, as rightful iuge,  
 To deuoyde fro me the inwarde sorowe,  
 Lest I lyue nat to the nexte morowe.

Within myne herte is impressed ful sore  
 His royal forme, his shappe, his semelynesse, 380  
 His porte, his chere, his goodnesse euermore,  
 His noble persone with al gentylnesse ;  
 He is the welle of al parfytnesse,  
 The very redemer of al mankynde ;  
 Him loue I best with hert, soule, and mynde. 385

In his absence my paynes ful bytter be,  
 Right wel I maye it fele now inwardly,  
 No wonder is though they hurte or slee me,  
 They cause me to crye so rewfully.  
 Myne herte oppressed is so wonderfully 390  
 Onely for him, whiche is so bright of blee :  
 Alas ! I trowe I shal him neuer se.

My ioye is translate ful farre in exile,  
 My myrthe is chaunged in-to paynes colde,  
 My lyfe I thynke endureth but a whyle, 395  
 Anguysshe and payne is that I beholde ;  
 Wherefore my handes thus I wringe and folde,  
 In-to this grave I loke, I cal, I pray,  
 Dethe remayneth, and lyfe is borne away.

Now must I walke and wander here and there, 400  
 Got wote to what partes I shal me dresse,  
 With quakyng herte, wepyng many a tere,  
 To seke out my loue and al my swetnesse.  
 I wolde he wist what mortal heuynesse  
 About myne herte reneweth more and more, 405  
 Than wolde he nat kepe pyte long in store.

Without him I may nat long endure,  
 His love so sore worketh within my brest,  
 And euer I wepe before this sepulture,  
 Sighyng ful sore, as myne herte shulde brest. 410  
 Duryng my lyfe I shal optayne no rest,  
 But mourne and wepe, where that euer I go,  
 Makyng complaynt of al my mortal wo.

Fast I crye, but there is no audyence ;  
 My commyng hider was him for to please ; 415  
 My soule opprest is here with his absence,  
 Alas ! he lyst nat to sette myne herte in ease :  
 Wherefore to payne my selfe \*withal disease  
 I shal nat spare, tyl he take me to grace,  
 Or els shal I sterue here in this place. 420

Ones if I might with him speke,  
 It were al my ioye with parfyte plesaunce,  
 So that I myght to him myne hert breke,  
 I shulde anone deuoude al my greuaunce, 425  
 For he is the blysse of very recreaunce.  
 But nowe, alas ! I can nothyng do so,  
 For in stede of ioye naught haue I but wo.

His noble corse within myne hertes rote  
 Depe is graued, whiche shal neuer slake,  
 Nowe is he gone to what place I ne wote, 430  
 I mourne, I wepe, and al is for his sake ;  
 Sith he is paste, here a vowe I make  
 With hertely promyse, and therto I me bynde,  
 Neuer to cease tyl I may him fynde.

Vnto his mother I thynke for to go, 435  
 Of her haply some comforte may I take ;  
 But one thyng yet me feareth, and no mo :  
 Yf I any mention of him make,  
 Of my wordes she wolde trymble and quake,  
 And who coude her blame, she hauing but one ; 440  
 The son borne away, the mother wol mone.

Sorowes many hath she suffred trewly,  
 Sith that she first conceyued him and bare,  
 And seun thynges there be most specially 445  
 That drowneth her hert in sorowe and care,  
 Yet, lo ! in no wyse may they compare  
 With this one nowe, the whiche if she knewe,  
 She wolde her paynes euerichone renewe.

Great was her sorrow, by mennes sayeng  
 Whan in the temple Symeon Iustus 450  
 Shewyng to her these wordes prophesieng  
<sup>1</sup> (Tuam animam pertransibit gladius) ;  
 Also whan Herode, that tyraunt furious,  
 Her childe pursued in euery place,  
 For his lyfe went neither mercy ne grace. 455

She mourned whan she knewe him gone,  
 Ful long she sought or she him founde ayene ;  
 Whan he went to dethe, his crosse him vpon,  
 It was to her sight a rewfyl payne ;  
 Whan he hong theron betwene theues twayn, 460  
 And the speare vnto his hert thrust right,  
 She swouned and to the grounde there pight.

Whan deed and blody in her lappe lay  
 His blessed body, bothe handes and fete al tore,  
 She cryed out and sayd, "nowe, welaway!  
 Thus arayde was neuer man before." 465  
 Whan haste was made his body to be bore  
 Vnto his sepulture, here to remayne,  
 Vnnethes for wo she coude her sustayne.

These sorowes seyn lyke swerdes euery one 470  
 His mothers hert wounded fro syde to syde ;  
 But if she knewe her sonne thus gone,  
 Out of this worlde she shulde with dethe ryde,  
 For care she coude no lenger here abyde,  
 Hauyng no more ioye nor consolatioun, 475  
 Than I here standyng in this statioun.

Wherfore her to se I dare nat presume,  
 Fro her presence I wol my selfe refrayne ;  
 Yet had I leuer to dye and consume,  
 Than his mother shulde haue any more payn. 480  
 Neverthelesse her sonne wolde I se ful fayne,  
 His presence was very ioye and swetnesse,  
 His absence is but sorowe and heuynesse.

There is no more, sithe I may him nat mete,  
 Whom I desyre aboue al other thyng, 485  
 Nedes I must take the soure with the swete,  
 For of his noble corse I here no tyding ;  
 Ful ofte I crye and my handes wring,  
 Myne herte, alas ! relenteth al in payne,  
 Whiche wol brast bothe senewe and vayne. 490



Alas ! howe vnhappy was this woful hour,  
 Wherein is thus myspended my seruyce,  
 For myne entente and eke my trewe labour  
 To none effecte may come in any wyse ;  
 Alas ! I thynke if he do me dyspise, 495  
 And lyst nat to take my symple obseruaunce,  
 There is no more, but dethe is my fynauce.

I haue him called, <sup>1</sup>Sed non respondet mihi,  
 Wherefore my myrth is tourned to mourning ;  
 O dere lorde, <sup>2</sup>Quid mali feci tibi, 500  
 That me to comforte I fynde non erthly thyng ?  
 Alas, haue compassyon of my cryeng !  
 If fro me <sup>3</sup>Faciem tuam abscondis,  
 There is no more but <sup>4</sup>Consumere me vis.

Within myne hert is grounded thy figure 505  
 That al this worldes horryble tourment  
 May nat it aswage, it is so without measure,  
 It is so brennyng, it is so feruent :  
 Remembre, lorde, I haue ben dilygent  
 Euer the to please onely and no mo, 510  
 Myne herte is with the where soeuer I go.

Therefore my dere darlyng, <sup>5</sup>Trahe me post te,  
 And lette me nat stande thus desolate,  
<sup>6</sup>(Quia non est qui consoletur me) ;  
 Myne herte for the is disconsolate, 515  
 My paynes also nothyng me moderate,  
 Nowe if it lyste the to speke with me a-lyue,  
 Come in hast, for my hert a-sonder wyl ryue,

To the I profer, lo, my poore seruyce,  
 The for to please after myne owne entent, 520  
 I offre here, as in deuout sacrifice,  
 My boxe replete with precious oyntment,  
 Myne eyen twayne wepyng suffycient,  
 Myne herte with anguysshe fulfilled is, alas !  
 My soule eke redy for loue about to pas. 525

Naught els haue I the to please or pay ;  
 For if myne hert were golde or precious stone,  
 It shulde be thyne without any delay,  
 With hertely chere thou shuldest haue it anone.  
 Why suffrest thou me than to stande alone? 530  
 Thou hast, I trowe, my wepyng in disdayne,  
 Or els thou knowest nat what is my payne.

1 Cant. v. 6.

3 Job. xiii. d. 24.

5 Cant. i. 3.

2 Matt. xxvii. d. 23.

4 Job. 13 d. 26.

6 Lam. i. 21.

Yf thou withdrawe thy noble dalyaunce  
 For ought that euer I displeased the,  
 Thou knowest right wel it is but ignoraunce, 535  
 And of no knowlege for certaynte.  
 If I haue offended, lorde, forgyue it me ;  
 Gladde I am for to make ful repentaunce  
 Of al thyng that hath ben to thy greuaunce.

Myne herte, alas ! swelleth within my brest, 540  
 So sore opprest with anguisshe and with payne,  
 That al to peces forsothe it wol brest,  
 But if I se thy blessed corse agayne,  
 For lyfe ne dethe I can nat me refrayne :  
 If you make delay, thou mayst be sure, 545  
 Myne herte wol leape in-to this sepulture.

Alas ! my lorde, why farest thou thus with me ?  
 My tribulation yet haue in mynde.  
 Where is thy mercy ? where is thy pyte,  
 Whiche euer I trusted in the to fynde ? 550  
 Somtyme thou were to me bothe good and kynde :  
 Lette it please the my prayer to accept,  
 Whiche with teares I haue here bewept.

On me thou oughtest to haue very routh,  
 Sith for the is al this mournyng, 555  
 For sithe I to the aplyghted first my trouth,  
 I never varied with discording ;  
 That knowest thou best, myne owne darlyng.  
 Why constraynest thou me thus to wayle ?  
 My wo forsoth can the nothyng auayle. 560

I haue endured without variaunce,  
 Right as thou knowest, thy louer iust and trew,  
 With hert and thought aye at thyne ordynaunce ;  
 Lyke to the saphire alwaye in one hewe,  
 I never chaunged the for no newe. 565  
 Why withdrawest thou [fro] my presence,  
 Sith al my thought is for thyne absence ?

With herte entier, swete lorde, I crye to the,  
 Enclyne thyne eares to my petycioun,  
 And come : <sup>1</sup> Velociter exaudi me, 570  
 Remembre myne hertes dispositioun,  
 It maye nat endure in this conditioun ;  
 Therefore out of these paynes <sup>2</sup> Libera me,  
 And where thou arte, <sup>3</sup> Pone me iuxta te.

<sup>1</sup> Psalm lxxviii. 18, 19 ; ci. 3.    <sup>2</sup> Job xvii. 3 ; Th. *has* Lebera.    <sup>3</sup> id.

- Lette me beholde, O Iesu, thy blyssed face, 575  
 Thy faire, glorious, angelyke visage!  
 Bowe thyne eares to my complaynt, alas!  
 For to conuey me out of this rage.  
 Alas, my lorde! take fro me this dommage,  
 And to my desyre for mercy condiscende, 580  
 For non but thou may my greuaunce amende.
- Nowe yet, good lorde, I the beseche and pray,  
 As thou raysed my brother Lazarus  
 From dethe to lyfe, the fourth day,  
 Came ayen in body and soule precious, 585  
 As great a thyng mayst thou shewe vnto vs  
 Of thy selfe, by power of thy godheed,  
 As thou dyd of him lyenge in graue deed.
- Myne hert is wounded with thy charite,  
 It brenneth, it flameth incessauntly ; 590  
 Come, my dere lorde, <sup>1</sup>Ad adiuvandum me,  
 Nowe be nat longe, my payne to multiply,  
 Lest in the meane tyme I departe and dye ;  
 In thy grace I put bothe hope and confydence,  
 To do as it pleaseth thy hye magnifycence. 595
- Floodes of dethe and tribulatioun  
 In-to my soule I fele entred ful depe ;  
 Alas, that here is no consolatioun!  
 Euer I wayle, euer I mourne and wepe,  
 And sorowe hath wounded myne hert ful depe : 600  
 O dere loue, no marueyle though I dye,  
<sup>2</sup>(Sagitte tue infixe sunt mihi).
- Wandryng in this place as in wyldernesse,  
 No comforte haue I, ne yet assuraunce,  
 Desolate of ioye, replete with fayntnesse, 605  
 No answeere receyuyng of myne enquirance,  
 Myne herte also graued with displeasaunce,  
 Wherefore I may say, O deus, deus,  
<sup>3</sup>(Non est dolor sicut dolor meus).
- Mine hert expresth <sup>4</sup>Quod dilexi multum, 610  
 I may nat endure, though I wolde fayne ;  
 For nowe <sup>5</sup>Solum superest sepulchrum,  
 I knowe it right wel by my huge payne,  
 Thus for loue I may nat lyfe sustayne ;  
 But, o god, I muse what ayleth the, 615  
<sup>6</sup>(Quod sic repente precipitas me).

1 Psal. xxxix. 14.

2 Psal. xxxvii. 3.

3 Lam. i. 12.

4 Luc. vii. 47.

5 Job. xvii. A. 1.

6 Job. x. B. 8.

Alas! I se it wyl none otherwyse be,  
 Nowe must I take my leaue for euermore,  
 This bytter payne hath almost discomfyte me,  
 My loues corse I can in no wyse restore. 620  
 Alas, to this wo that euer I was bore!  
 Here at his tombe nowe must I dye and starue,  
 Dethe is aboute my herte for to carue.

My testament I wolde begyn to make;  
 To god the father my soule I commende;  
 To Iesu my loue, that dyed for my sake, 625  
 My herte and al bothe I gyue and sende,  
 In whose loue my lyfe maketh an ende;  
 My body also to this monument  
 I here bequeth, bothe boxe and oyntment. 630

Of al my wylles, lo! nowe I make the last,  
 Right in this place, within this sepulture,  
 I wol be buryed, whan I am deed and past,  
 And vpon my graue I wol haue this scripture:—  
 "Here within resteth a goostly creature, 635  
 Christes trew louer, Mary Magdalayne,  
 Whose hert for loue brake in peces twayne."

Ye vertuous women tender of nature,  
 Ful of pyte and of compassyoun,  
 Resorte, I pray you, vnto my sepulture, 640  
 To synge my dirige with great deuotioun;  
 Shewe your charite in this conditioun,  
 Syng with pyte, and let your hertes wepe,  
 Remembring I am deed and layde to slepe.

Than whan ye begyn to parte me fro, 645  
 And ended haue your mournyng obseruaunce,  
 Remembre where so euer that ye go,  
 Alway to sertche and make due enqueraunce  
 After my loue, myne hertes sustenaunce,  
 In euery towne and in euery vyllage, 650  
 If ye maye here of this noble ymage.

And if it happe by any grace at laste  
 That ye my trewe loue fynde in any cost,  
 Say that his Magdaleyne is deed and past,  
 For his pure loue hath yelded up the gost; 655  
 Say that of al thyng I loued him most,  
 And that I might nat this dethe eschewe,  
 My paynes so sore dyde euer renewe.

- And in token of loue perpetual,  
 Whan I am buryed in this place present, 660  
 Take out myne hert, the very rote and al,  
 And close it within this boxe of oyntment ;  
 To my dere loue make thereof a present ;  
 Knelyng downe with wordes lamentable,  
 Do your message speke fayre and trefable. 665
- Say that to him my selfe I commende  
 A thousande tymes with herte so free,  
 This poore token say to him I sende,  
 Pleaseth his goodnesse to take it in gree ;  
 It is his owne of right, it is his fee, 670  
 Which he asked, whan he sayd long before,  
 " Gyue me thy herte, and I desyre no more."
- A due, my lorde, my loue so faire of face,  
 A due, my turtel doue so fresshe of hue,  
 A due, my myrthe, a due, al my solace, 675  
 A due, alas, my sauour lorde Iesu,  
 A due, the gentyllest that euer I knewe,  
 A due, my most excellent paramour,  
 Fayrer than rose, sweter than lylly flour.
- A due, my hope of al plesure eternal, 680  
 My lyfe, my welth, and my prosperite,  
 Myne herte of golde, my peerle oriental,  
 Myne adamant of parfyte charite,  
 My chefe refuge, and my felycite,  
 My comforte and al my recreatioun ; 685  
 Farwel, my perpetual saluatioun.
- Farewel, myne emperour celestyal,  
 Most beautiful prince of al mankynde,  
 A due, my lorde, of herte most lyberal,  
 Farwel, my swetest, bothe soule and mynde ; 690  
 So louyng a spouse shal I neuer fynde,  
 A due, my souerayne and very gentylman,  
 Farewel, dere herte, as hertely as I can.
- Thy wordes eloquent, flowyng in swetnesse  
 Shal no more, alas ! my mynde reconforte ; 695  
 Wherefore my lyfe must ende in bytternesse,  
 For in this worlde shal I neuer resorte  
 To the, which was myne heuenly disporte,  
 I se, alas ! it wol none other be,  
 Nowe farwel the grounde of al dignite. 700

A due, the fayrest that euer was bore,  
 Alas, I may nat se your blessed face ;  
 Nowe welaway ! that I shal se no more  
 Thy blessed visage, so replete with grace,  
 705 Wherin is printed my parfyte solace ;  
 A due, myne hertes roote, and al for euer,  
 Nowe farewel, I must from the disceuer.

My soule for anguysshe is nowe ful thursty,  
 I faynt right sore for heuynesse,  
 My lorde, my spouse, <sup>1</sup>Cur me dereliquisti,  
 710 Sith I for the suffre al this distresse ?  
 What causeth the to seme this mercylesse ?  
 Sith it the pleseth of me to make an ende,  
<sup>2</sup>(In manus tuas) my spirite I commende.

¶ FINIS.

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## LIFE.

I, Bertha Marian Skeat, was born at East Dereham, in Norfolk, in 1861. I was educated at home, then at a large day school in Cambridge (Miss Thornton's), and afterwards became a student in Newnham College, Cambridge. I gained an Honours Certificate in the Cambridge Higher Local Examination, including a First Class in Religious Knowledge, English Language, Literature and History, German, French, Latin and Greek. In 1886 I obtained a First Class with Honours in the Medieval and Modern Languages Tripos, involving French and German Composition, Anglo-Saxon, Middle English, History of English Literature, and Icelandic Prose. Afterwards I became a Student in the Cambridge Teachers' College, and at the end of my course obtained the Certificate of the Teachers' Training Syndicate, with Honours in the Theory and Practice of Education. I remained two years longer in the Cambridge Teachers' College, as Lecturer in the History and Methods of Education. Since then I have held the post of English Assistant Mistress in various large English schools.

Among the many Professors and teachers under whom I have studied, my thanks are specially due to the following: Professor the Rev. Dr. Skeat, Professor Hales, Professor Henry Sidgwick, Professor Henry Jones, of Glasgow, the Right Honourable the Bishop of Durham, Mr. E. Magnússon, Miss E. P. Hughes. I wish also to thank Professors Vetter, Hunziker, Bächtold and Morf for the teaching I received from them while studying at the University of Zürich; also Fräulein Dr. Hedwig Waser, of Zürich, for her excellent instruction in the History of German Literature. Furthermore, I wish to express my gratitude towards all fellow-students, both in Cambridge and Zürich, who by their kindly interest and helpful suggestions have aided me hitherto in my various studies.